

THE WICKED WASTE AT WILKINSON'S

JULY, 1906

By William Hamilton Osborne

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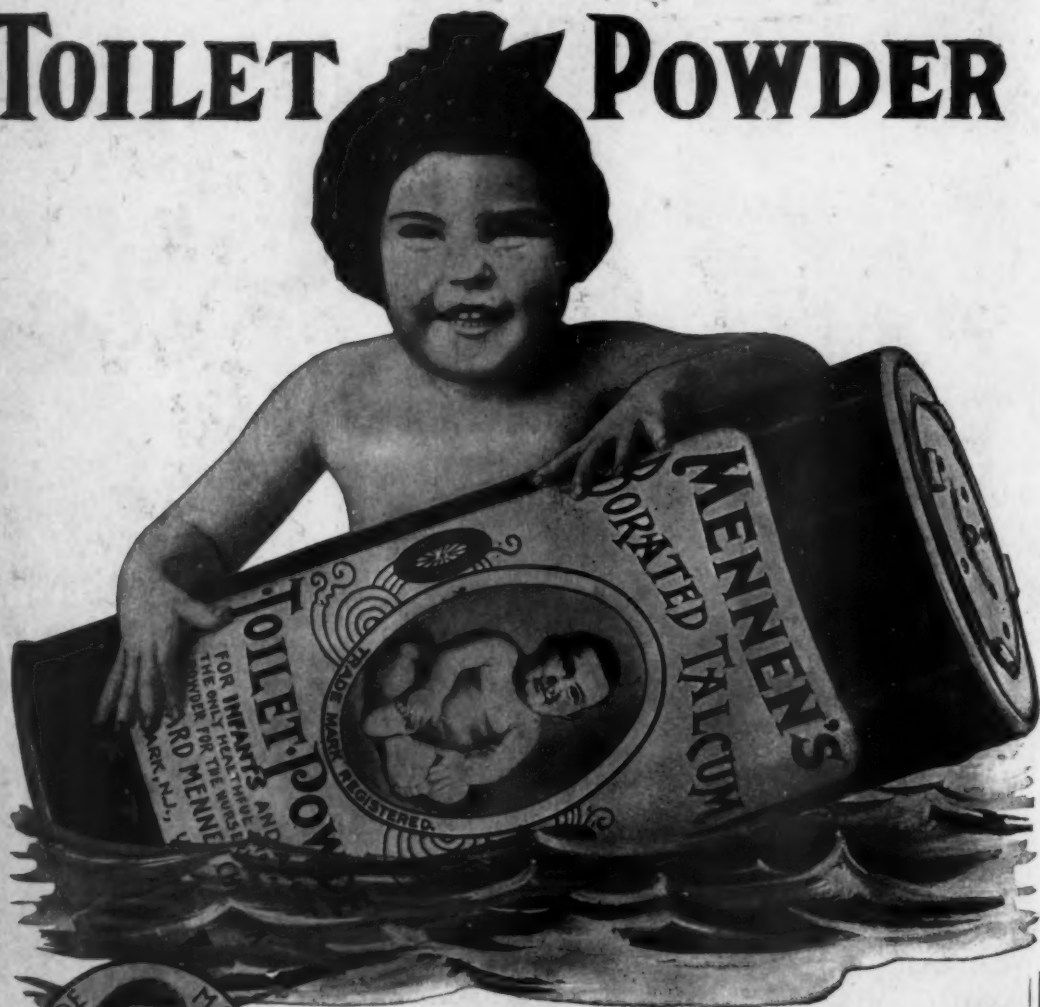


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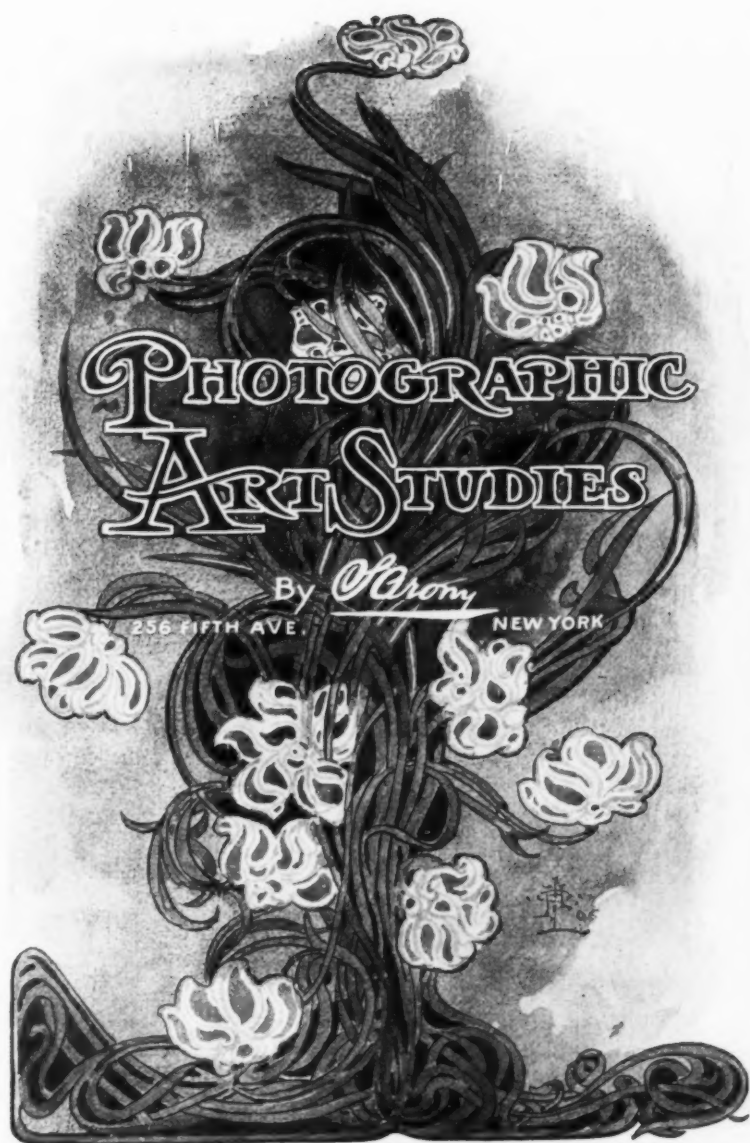


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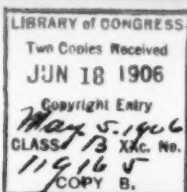




DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

Three soldiers rushed at him with fixed bayonets.

"The King and Tommy Cripps;" see page 310



THE RED BOOK

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No. 3

The King and Tommy Cripps

BY HENRY LOUIS MENCKEN

Calm-eye! he scoffs at sword and crown,
Or panic-blinded stabs and slays:
Blatant he bids the world bow down,
Or cringing begs a crumb of praise—
An American.

Tommy Cripps was one of those uncompromising Americans who indignantly spurn all temptations to belong to other nations. He had two large, white teeth in the very center of his upper jaw, and his ears, viewed from behind, seemed to meet his head at something approaching a right angle. All of this gave him an air of quite startling ferocity, to which his assertive, resourceful, cocksure manner lent color. He believed that the United States, in some mysterious fashion, governed and regulated the rest of the world, and in proof of its supremacy he was wont to cite the fact that he himself had never met defeat in physical combat at the hands of any foreign boy of his age, whether Frenchman, German, Italian, Russian, or Spaniard. Tommy was twelve and he had good, strong legs, and muscles in his arms that he delighted to show. His greatest exploit, all things considered, was his defeat of two little Austrian dukes at San Remo. He had met them on the esplanade in front of the Grand Hotel, estrayed from their tutor, and on their commenting adversely upon the cut of his Norfolk jacket, he had seized them by their royal necks and struck their aristocratic heads together.

Despite the frequent chances it gave him to help impress upon the world a realization of the fearful might of Uncle Sam, Tommy did not like the idea of traveling

about Europe. His mother, too, felt that it had its disadvantages, for hotel life was making a spoiled, domineering, boastful boy of him, and it was frequently necessary for his father to chastise him, which is an operation painful to all concerned. But this traveling had to be done, nevertheless, for Mr. Cripps was some sort of agent for a large steel works at home, and it was part of his work to journey hither and thither over half the continent, conferring with ministers of public improvements and railroad directors and stout apoplectic merchant princes. Tommy and Tommy's mother went with him, up and down over the land, from the Baltic to the Dardanelles. Tommy used to spell out the long words in the *Paris Herald* and *London Times* and wish he could go back to the land where every person one met spoke real English and every boy knew the difference between a baseball and a bat.

This traveling had continued for three years, and Tommy remembered three days that had seemed peculiarly desolate and gloomy. Each of these had been a Fourth of July. The first had been spent by the Cripps family at Christiania, in Norway, where it was cold and cheerless, and the second at Rome, where there was much speech-making by a lot of old fogies and discordant patriotic song-singing, not to mention the sentimental drinking of rye whisky. The third Fourth was passed miserably in a train on the great Siberian railway, somewhere between Moscow and Omsk, where Mr. Cripps was going to look into the building of a steel bridge. The utter gloom and anguish of that day, with

its dull panorama of rolling steppe, made Tommy resolve that if he lived to see another Fourth he would make it glorious. He was tired of quiet and weariness on his country's birthday. He wanted firecrackers and red fire and parades and all that sort of thing.

Being an American of action, and having cunning of the kind that a small boy develops when he is left too much to his own devices, he began preparations a good while in advance. At Paris, where his father was detained most of the winter, he laid in a small stock of little American flags and in London, where he spent a week, he bought a miniature toy cannon. In London, too, he made the purchase which delighted him most of all. It consisted of a package of half a dozen big firecrackers—big, red ones of the kind that blow off the fingers of boys at home. Tommy found them at a store devoted to the sale of Chinese goods, and the man refused to sell them, as he said to "a child." This sent Tommy back to the hotel for an old friend, the under-porter, who in consideration of sixpence in hand, went to the store, represented him in the transaction and turned the crackers over to him.

Tommy hid them, with the cannon and the flags and his tin soldiers in the bottom of the satchel that held his school books. This was in March, and thereafter, for three months or more, he successfully distracted from them the attention of the customs officials of five nations. Once, on the Belgian frontier, a rude functionary in red whiskers plunged his hand into the satchel and felt about. Tommy's heart was in his mouth, for he thought that the firecrackers, because they were American, would have to pay enormous duties, and he was afraid that his father might take them away from him and treat him to the bastinado for carrying them. But after a moment the red whiskered officer passed on and thereafter there was no trouble, and the Fourth of July approached and Tommy got ready.

Mr. Cripps, one day, told him that they would spend the glorious holiday in the capital of one of the seven-and-thirty lesser German kingdoms. Tommy remembered it as a dull and common-place old town, with crooked streets and high, over-hang-

ing houses, and he knew that there would be no other American boys at the hotel to help him celebrate. But he had got half used to loneliness and had begun to cease thinking of it. If need be, he would celebrate the day single-handed and alone, either on the street, on the roof, or in his room, and the celebration would be the best that old Rheinstadt ever knew.

The Crippses arrived early on the morning of the Fourth and engaged rooms at the gloomy old Rheinstadter Hof, the only hotel in the place. For Rheinstadt the streets seemed lively, despite a fine rain that made little pools between the ancient cobblestones and damped the uniform of the gorgeous *polizei*. There were crowds of wooden-shod, heavy-faced townspeople everywhere and the *polizei*, afoot and on horseback, kept dashing up and down, waving their short swords and looking as important and ferocious as could be. The man who kept the hotel told Mr. Cripps that King Ferdinand XVIII, of Lippe-Hochheim (which was the kingdom that had Rheinstadt for its capital) was coming home that afternoon and that his loyal subjects were assembled to greet him. A large portrait of his majesty hung in the parlor of the Rheinstadter Hof. It showed him to be a tall gentleman with a long gray beard, wearing a feather in the side of his Alpine hat. Tommy had seen kings before and this one lost nothing by comparison with the others. Most of the latter were lean and consumptive-looking or fat and squat. Few inspired much admiration in the breast of a patriotic American.

Tommy wanted to fare forth into the crowd and see the show, but Mr. Cripps, as a punishment for a minor misdemeanor of the day before, condemned him to go to the dull old *thiergarten*, to look at the strange beasts from the Congo and Mesopotamia. Tommy cried and stamped his foot, but his father dragged him off and they spent the forenoon tramping the wet gravel walks between the cages, Mr. Cripps explaining the nature of each particular beast and Tommy thinking of the Fourth of July celebration that was dying abornin'. But at midday, when they returned to the hotel, there appeared the American consul, who was by nationality



DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

Tommy sulked awhile.

a Swede, with an invitation for Mr. and Mrs. Cripps to eat a German dinner with him at his lodgings at two o'clock. It was accepted, and Tommy was left in his room at the Rheinstadter Hof, a book called "Harvey's Grammar" to read, and a caution to remain indoors until his father and mother returned.

"Can't I go out and look at the parade?" he asked pleadingly.

"You can look at the parade from the window," said Mr. Cripps.

Tommy sulked awhile and then, in

despair, he searched in his satchel for his precious treasures. There they were, below the school books and the tin soldiers, six round, red crackers, a little bundle of flags, and the toy cannon. Tommy took them out and ranged them on the table. One of the crackers, he discovered, was mashed, and the powder was leaking from it. With his jack-knife he ripped the casing and gathered all of the powder upon a piece of paper. Then he loaded his toy cannon with it and rammed it home. The scratch of a match, a splutter and—bang!

It wasn't as loud as the big guns of the Oregon, but it was a good, hearty "bang!"

Tommy listened for a moment to see if the report would attract any of the hotel porters, but apparently the shouts and clatter of hoofs in the *plaza* outside had drowned it. So he opened the window, to let the stifling smoke out and prepared to have his little celebration there and then, regardless of the flogging it might bring when his father returned. Cracker number two—the second of the six—sacrificed its young life in a dismal fizzle, and Tommy resolved to dissect the third as he had done the first, and to load its powder in his cannon. Just as he began work upon it there was a great tumult in the *plaza* and he ran to the window to see what had happened. Below him—four stories below—was the crowd that had begun gathering all day and through the middle of it ran a lane lined by *polizei* on horseback. The king had arrived and there, coming down the crooked old street that led from the railroad station, was his carriage. Ten horsemen, in bedraggled plumes and spangles, rode in front of it, and fifty behind, and on each side there were close ranks of *polizei* and soldiers. It was a royal progress, and despite the fine rain and the glistening pools between the cobblestones, it made a show of magnificence. Tommy leaned far out of the window to watch it.

The carriage proceeded slowly until it came to the *plaza* and then it started to cross, with its horses at a light trot, toward the street which led to the palace. Tommy craned his neck to see the king, but the carriage windows were closed and the guards' swords touched the very wheels. Suddenly as he looked, the idea seized him, an idea that made his untamed American blood leap with joy. He would awaken Rheinstadt like a thunder clap! He would make the sleepy old city sit up and stare!

Out, then, from his pocket came a match and "scratch" it went upon the window sill. Then the flame touched the fuse of the third cracker, the fuse sputtered—and Tommy threw the cracker far out into space. For a second or so he watched it as it fell, turning over and over, and sending forth a thin tail of little red sparks. The *polizei* saw it, too, and one of them

jumped in air to grab it as it neared the ground. But he was too late, and with a thunderous report it exploded directly beside the driver of the king's carriage and almost under the off horse's hoofs. Then the crowd yelled, the *polizei* drew their short swords, the king's horses reared and pranced and his majesty, long of beard and white of face, bounded out into the street.

"Anarchists!" shouted the crowd.

"Back!" shouted the *polizei*.

The king looked about him as if he were half dazed, and a dozen soldiers closed in about him. And simultaneously there was a general tumult. Horses reared, soldiers flashed their swords, officers shouted orders back and forth, and the crowd yelled and struggled and fought and roared.

"Death to the anarchists!" howled a man beside him, and the cry was taken up by the crowd.

But where were the anarchists? No one could find them. Whence had come the bomb? No one knew. Suddenly the corporal of *polizei* who had grabbed it remembered that it had come down from above. He looked up—and saw Tommy Cripps in the act of launching another one.

Two minutes later three soldiers, excited and out of breath, smashed the door of Tommy's room and rushed at him with fixed bayonets.

"What do you want?" demanded Tommy in belated terror.

The soldiers sprang upon him and his arms were pinioned behind him. Out in the hallway, with three other soldiers, was the proprietor of the hotel, pinioned also. He was crying loudly and protesting that Tommy had ruined him. Tommy himself, for the moment, was too scared to cry.

But in a moment his native pugnacity and degenerate brashness came to his rescue. He struggled with his captors and tried to break his bonds.

"Lemme go!" he screamed. "Lemme go, I tell you! my father'll break your heads! Lemme go!"

The soldiers, apparently did not hear him. On the table beside him was the remainder of his stock of ordinance—the toy cannon and the three big, red crackers.

One of the soldiers gathered up the crackers gingerly and the others pushed Tommy out of the room, ahead of them.

Down the long stairs they went to the street. At the entrance of the hotel there was a great, surging crowd, shouting lustily, and when Tommy appeared, manacled and white-faced, the people made a rush for him, crying "Down with the anarchists!" Those

who were near enough to actually see him marveled at his youth and made guesses as to his nationality, but the majority could only see the waving plumes upon the helmets of the soldiers in charge of him. The *polizei*—there were scores and scores of them by now—held the struggling Rhein-stadters back and Tommy was bundled into a dark, barred wagon. Then the horses were lashed, the wagon lurched forward, and there began a wild, rough ride over the medieval cobblestones. Tommy was growing thoroughly frightened and in a moment, he feared, he might begin to cry. The celebration had long since passed the patriotic stage.

After awhile, the wagon halted in what seemed to be the courtyard of a huge jail, and Tommy was dragged forth and led into a large, gloomy room, with bars at the windows. At a desk sat a tall man with a bristling, military moustache and a gaudy green uniform, and beside him was



DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

Tommy threw the cracker.

another and even taller man, with a beard like the king's and a red uniform heavy with gold cords and ribbons and medals. Half a dozen soldiers, with rifles at the carry, stood at either side of them.

"It is for your excellency to interrogate the prisoner," said the first man in German and with a deferential air.

His excellency glared at Tommy.

"What is your name?" he demanded, also in German.

Tommy shook his head. He understood German but the tall man scared him.

His excellency repeated the question, in English.

"Thomas George Cripps," replied the boy.

"He's a mere child," observed the green uniformed man.

"I am twelve," said Tommy.

"Your nationality?" demanded his excellency.

"United States,"

answered Tommy, and the man in green wrote it down.

The tall man with the medals stroked his beard for a moment and contemplated his prisoner meditatively.

"Are you an anarchist?" he asked.

"A what?" replied Tommy.

"An anarchist."

"What's that?"

His excellency deigned to smile.

"A man," he said, "that throws bombs at kings."

"I didn't throw any bombs," protested Tommy, gradually regaining his assurance.

His excellency laughed again. He had a most evil laugh.

"You better let me go!" exclaimed Tommy explosively. "I ain't done anything!"

"We shall see," answered his excellency, majestically.

"Why don't you let me go?" cried Tommy.

"Because you are accused of trying to kill the king," replied his excellency.

Tommy's heart sank to his shoes. He remembered stories, clandestinely read, in which innocent persons were accused of all sorts of crimes and tortured with ghastly cruelty. They were attempting to distort the harmless explosion of a fire cracker—"just fun," as Tommy put it—into murder.

"Lemme go!" he cried. "Lemme go! My father'll have you arrested!"

His tears overcame him as the desk telephone before his excellency jingled, and the rest of his speech was lost. There were three short, sharp jingles, and his excellency sprang to the instrument and glued his ear to the receiver. The three jingles were a warning that the king was at the other end of the line, and it behooved all who heard them to hasten and harken.

"Yes, your majesty," said his excellency, talking into the 'phone.

"The prisoner seems to be a mere child . . . no, not an evil face. . . rather impudent. . . an American, of course. . . denies the charge. . . I beg pardon? . . . half a dozen, I fancy. . . scared, but brazen. . . denies connection with Rugio and Lispiani. . . may I ask? . . . No; your majesty. . . to the palace? . . . at once, sir. . . at once . . ."

His excellency turned from the telephone and gave an order in German.

"You are to be taken before his majesty, the king," he said to Tommy.

Tommy's face brightened. Kings, he remembered, always played the rôle of fairy deliverer. He would confound his

enemies. He would be triumphantly acquitted—

But just as he was being led from the room his heart sank again, for a soldier grabbed him from behind and he was held firmly. Some one had remembered that the prisoner had not been searched, and here he was about to go into the presence of the king with a gun, perhaps, or maybe a dozen of them, concealed in his clothes! His excellency muttered something about a *dummer narr* and the other officer colored. A short, squat soldier carefully felt in all of Tommy's pockets and dragged forth their contents. An American boy's pockets—and those of any other boy, for that matter—are his safe deposit vaults, and Tommy's were laden with the spoil of Europe. There was a bit of colored stone from Pompeii, a curious brass key filched from a hotel at Venice, three English pennies with holes in them, the main fly-wheel of an American dollar watch, a bundle of colored cord, half a dozen odd buttons, two bent nails, an artist's thumb tack, a lead wheel from a toy locomotive, three tin soldiers, all rough-riders; the stump of a lead pencil and a dried and petrified sponge.

Tommy protested loudly against being robbed of these treasures, and as he saw the fly-wheel of the dollar watch drop into the big red envelope in the officers' hands he once more came near shedding tears. But soon his native self-possession grew strong again and he decided that, come what may, it would not do to show the white feather in the presence of foreigners—particularly on the Fourth of July. And so he marched bravely on, like a patriot to the gibbet, and entered again the black wagon with the barred window.

The distance to the palace, apparently, was not great, for the wagon stopped in a few moments, and Tommy was taken out and led into a huge room with vast paintings on the walls. One of the paintings represented the beheading of a pale young man with long hair and a ruffled shirt, and it made Tommy shudder.

In a moment the same tall, gray bearded man who had been in the carriage in the *plaza* came into the room, and the officers who guarded Tommy bowed low.

He was the king and he motioned them to go. When they had disappeared down the corridor he asked Tommy to sit down, and pulled up another chair near him.

"So you are the anarchist?" he said, with a smile.

Tommy had seen a good many kings and shoals of lesser royalties, but this was the first time that one of them had addressed a word to him directly, and despite his assertive democracy, he was somewhat awed.

"I ain't an anarchist," he replied, in a faint, scared voice. "I'm just a boy. Those men robbed me."

"What men?" asked the king.

"Those men that brought me here to see you," replied Tommy. "They took my wheel and my stone from Pompeii. They grabbed me and squeezed my arm."

The king arose and laughed.

"But you threw a bomb at me," he said. Tommy noticed that he spoke English with the soft accent of an Englishman.

"It wasn't a bomb," he protested. "It was a shooting-cracker. It was one of those big double-Dutchmen."

"Why did you throw it at me?" asked the king solemnly. "Didn't you know it might hurt me? Had I injured you in any way?"

For the first time Tommy began to see that there might be an unmanly side to his adventure, and he was ashamed. He hung his head and was silent.

"How would you like it," continued the king, in his soft, gentle voice, "if I were to throw a bomb under the hoofs of your horses and scare you?"

Tommy, by now, was frankly embarrassed and felt his cheeks burn red.

"Did it—scare you?" he asked.

The king stroked his long beard and the ghost of a smile played in his eyes.

"Yes," he answered judicially, "I was scared. I feared that anarchists were after my life. When a man is a king, you know, he has to think of such things. It's not a pleasant trade."

Tommy saw a way to divert the discussion from his own misdemeanor.

"Don't you like being a king?" he asked blandly.

"Really I haven't given the matter much thought," replied his majesty. "Even if I

didn't like it, it would be hard, you know, to give the office to some one else. In your country a man is not made a president unless he asks for the place, or at least, not unless he is known to want it. But on this side of the ocean rulers are chosen in a different way. If you were my son, now, you would be king when I died."

"Have you got a son?" asked the cunning Tommy.

And now it was the king's turn to change the subject. His son? His boy? No other father, he sometimes thought, ever had such a useless, profligate, dissolute son as the crown prince of Lippe-Hochheim. The café keepers of the Riviera met him oftener than his father. The ballet girls of London and Berlin knew him better; the *boulevardiers* of Paris were more his friends. The king's face clouded and he did not answer Tommy's question.

"But why," he asked instead, "why did you drop that bomb, or shooting-cracker, or whatever it was, from the hotel window?"

"Because it was the Fourth of July," replied Tommy simply. "Everybody at home shoots off shooting-crackers on the Fourth of July."

"Why?" asked the king.

Tommy glanced up at him in surprise. The idea of a man, even a foreigner, who didn't know the significance of the Fourth of July was too much for him.

"Did you never hear of George Washington?" he asked.

"Yes," said the king, "I have heard of him."

"Well, the Fourth of July is the day he drove the English out of the country."

The king suppressed a smile.

"Washington was a great man," he observed.

"Yes," said Tommy, "he was the man that defeated the English. He beat them and kicked them out and they went back to England. At home the people are so glad of it that they raise a big rumpus every year. They have fireworks and speeches and the bands play and it's a holiday. Everybody has a holiday on the Fourth of July."

"I see," said the king. "And you wanted to have a holiday, too?"

"That's it," said Tommy, glad that his august pupil had grasped the idea. "I was all by myself and I wanted to have a little fun."

"And so you dropped your shooting-cracker in front of my carriage?"

Tommy's eyes fell, and he was uncomfortable once more. This king was a nice old man; he was sorry that he had scared him.

"And they arrested you?" continued his majesty.

"Yes, sir," said Tommy. "They grabbed me and stole everything I had in my pockets."

"Too bad!" said the king. "Too bad! I'll have them give it all back to you."

"You will?" exclaimed Tommy delightedly. "Thank you, sir. I'm much obliged."

"If you'll promise," continued the king, "that you won't drop shooting-crackers on me any more."

"I didn't mean to hurt you," said Tommy, sincerely repentant. "I just wanted to shoot off my shooting-crackers. When you came along and I saw that crowd—well, I dropped one of them out of the window. I only did it in fun."

"But you must be careful not to bother kings," said his majesty. "It's a bad business, my boy. If you had hurt me, I might have had to clap you into jail. Suppose you had killed me?"

Tommy shuddered.

"What then?"

Tommy did not know.

"They would have put you into jail for the rest of your life."

Tommy considered a moment.

"I think you're wrong there," he said, with naïve impudence. "You might clap me in jail, but I'd get out again."

The king seemed vastly amused, and Tommy hastened to impress him with the gravity of the situation.

"Did you ever see the battleship Oregon?" he asked.

The king said he had not.

"Well, then," said Tommy, "you ought to see her. We rowed to look at her at Naples. Her guns are as long—well, as from here to there," and he pointed to the far end of the room. "They shoot fifteen miles."

The king's eyes asked a question.

"She goes around helping Americans," said Tommy. "If one of them is robbed or gets into jail in a foreign country, she comes along and gets him out. The government keeps her for that."

"Let us hope," said the king, "that we'll never have to stand in front of her."

"I don't think," said Tommy apologetically, "that she would shoot at a king. I was just telling you—"

"Let us hope that she won't have to shoot at anybody for a long while to come. And now you must promise me to stop dropping shooting-crackers on kings. It's dangerous—particularly to the kings."

Tommy arose.

"I'm sorry," he said, "if I scared you. I didn't mean it. I just wanted to have some fun. I—I hope you won't think hard of me."

The king grasped Tommy's hand.

"You're forgiven," he said. "You have our—that is, my pardon. And now you run along and tell your father not to let you carry shooting-crackers about Europe."

"He didn't know it," protested Tommy. "It wasn't his fault. He and my mother were out at dinner."

"Give them my compliments," said the king.

His majesty pressed a button and a functionary appeared at the door.

"And if you care to see some fireworks," he continued, "bring your father and mother to the *garten* tonight. I have been away and—well, when a king comes home, it's the custom for his people to make a holiday of the day, to show him that they are satisfied with the way he is ruling them. There'll be fireworks—"

Tommy was delighted.

"Just like at home!" he said.

"Yes," said the king. "I think you'll enjoy it. And, by the way—"

He stopped and scribbled something on a piece of paper—

"This will admit you and your father and mother to the palace," he said, "and you can look at the fireworks from one of the windows."

"Thank you, sir," said Tommy. "Thank you, sir."

This king, in truth, was unusually nice,



DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

"But why did you drop that bomb?"

mighty nice—as nice as could be imagined.

"And now, be good," he said, in farewell. "Your property will be returned to you. Good-bye!"

Tommy went back to the hotel in a carriage, with three soldiers on horseback riding at each side, and his head swam in

recollection of his interview and in anticipation of the fireworks at night.

But he did not see the rockets and he did not again see the king. Instead he spent the evening *incommunicado*, in his room at the Rheinstadter Hof, meditating upon the burdens of life and the peculiar painfulness of parental slippers.

The Widow Hardwick

BY HARRIET A. NASH

To go back to the beginning, it had been a curious whim which impelled old Deacon Hardwick to name his twin daughters Ambition and Success. And it was a yet more curious circumstance that the names should prove to have been so correctly applied. For Success went comfortably through life finding all things desirable ready to her hand, while her sister searched restlessly for that which her heart desired and found nothing quite satisfactory because it was not something different.

Success married prosperously, and died in early womanhood contentedly. Who can say that she did not in this last, attain the crowning glory of her name? Ambition, left alone in the world by the death of her sister, closed her childhood's home, and for a decade her native town saw her no more.

She was thirty-five when she came back to Seaboro, a tall figure in widow's weeds of new and correct fashion, and an array of baggage which indicated that in the matter of worldly prosperity, at least, she had approached at last the fulfillment of her name. The huge trunks and boxes filled the spacious front hall of the old Hardwick house and overflowed upon the lawn. Seaboro had visions of fine furnishings for the old house and rich apparel for its mistress, when her period of mourning should be past, but to the disappointment of many, the large packing cases were stored unopened in an unused room, and only in one instance was public interest gratified by a disclosure of the contents. This was a heavy package of curious shape, which, after passing through the

speculative custody of baggage master and village truckman, found its destination in an unappropriated corner of the village churchyard, not far from the long row of headstones which marked the resting place of five generations of Hardwicks.

A group of interested townsmen gathered about while the village sexton with solemn care opened the wooden box, which proved to contain a marble headstone in elaborate design; long before it was set in place all Seaboro knew by heart its lettered inscription:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF JOHN,
BELOVED HUSBAND OF
A. BETHIAH HARDWICK.

"Amby seems to have changed her first name in room of her last, when she got married," declared old Dr. Jellison, facetiously.

But in the absence of all explanation Seaboro looked on respectfully, resting its faith upon the knowledge that no such headstone had ever been seen in Seaboro or even in the larger village of Grahamville, ten miles away.

The old Hardwick house remained as it had been since the memory of the oldest inhabitant, grim, forbidding, and without adornment outside or in; even the little circle where Success had once grown sweet-william and bachelor-buttons was a tangled waste and its wall of sea shells was crumbled and broken. The "Widow Hardwick," as Seaboro soon learned to call her, lavished all her thought and care upon that little plot in the cemetery, although all Seaboro knew it was an empty grave which she adorned.



DRAWN BY ANGUS MAC DONALL

The sexton opened the box.

This, however, was not an uncommon occurrence in Seaboro cemetery, where not a few of the simple stones bore the pathetic testimony, "Lost at sea." A large portion of the old town's population were satisfied as to the fate which had rendered "Amby Hardwick" the much respected object of their sympathy. A smaller circle preferred the belief that the deceased had been buried in a coal mine, since Ambition was known to have spent some years of her absence in western Pennsylvania while a few of vivid imagination inclined rather to the probability of a simple disappearance, and looked forward to possible sensational developments in the event of an unexpected return.

The widow offered no explanation, but with all due regard for the proprieties took the place in church and society which had been hers by right as Deacon Hardwick's daughter, yet with a difference she was not slow to perceive. This well-to-do widow, with a certain atmosphere of mystery, found a standing and influence in the community for which Ambition Hardwick, the girl, had looked in vain. The young people admired her, matrons came to ask her advice in all matters pertaining to domestic problems, while the aged received her with flattering reminiscences of her ancestors, and commented among themselves her unremitting devotion to the past.

She came one morning to the cemetery, watering-pot and trowel in hand, and a choice rose bush in a little basket, ready for transplanting. A week of dull weather as well as a severe cold kept her indoors and a little frown gathered between her eyes as she noted the weeds which had obtained a stronghold in her absence. The frown changed to a positive gasp of dismay as her eyes wandered across her own little plot—just wide enough for this one grave and another. Beside it, so close that the smooth turf was broken and some of her carefully tended plants were trampled by careless feet, was another grave—a rough mound clumsily covered with ragged sections of unfertile turf. Tomato cans and glass bottles, filled with dandelions and jack-in-the-pulpits, were set thickly upon it, while at the head a wild rose bush, plainly transplanted in haste too great to preserve its life, rustled dead leaves in the light breeze.

The Widow Hardwick looked about her. The small enclosure where inhabitants of Seaboro had been peacefully gathering for a hundred years was not without a rustic beauty of its own. Beyond its neat stone wall the wide shore broken now by an out-cropping ledge, and again by a cluster of stunted evergreens, stretched away to the open bay. The dories of the lobstermen and white sails of the little fishing schooners were visible close in shore, while farther out a noisy little steamer hurried through the blue water. The Widow Hardwick's eyes saw nothing save the broken turf at her feet and the unsightly row of tin cans with their brilliant labels still intact.

"Well, I never did!" she said indignantly.

She tried to turn her back upon the intruding grave, but it would not be ignored. Then she became absorbed in speculation. There had been no recent death in Seaboro.

"It is some of those Grape Harbor folks, like as any way," she decided indignantly. "They always were the pushing kind that didn't know how to keep away from where they wasn't wanted."

A group of children straggled through the gate, laden with elaborate floral offerings from wood and field. The old-

est, a boy of ten, carried under his arm a smooth square of board. The youngest, a girl of six, divided her attention between a thrifty potato plant in full blossom and a dilapidated rag doll. Their shrill chatter disturbed the peace of the old yard, and to Mrs. Hardwick's dismay they came straight towards her.

"Go away, children," she said severely. "You mustn't bring your playthings here."

The boy deposited his burden defiantly. Mrs. Hardwick observed that the board bore a faint resemblance to a plain headstone and was manifestly of the child's own manufacture. Letters cut from red paper formed the singular inscription, "M-ly, aged 30." Curiosity overcame her indignation, and the oldest girl's polite explanation that "they'd come to have a picnic by ma's grave," seemed to render objection useless.

"Where do you belong?" she asked, trying to speak sternly, even while she made mental note of the fact that the children's clothes, though curiously constructed, were neat and clean.

The boy pointed to a low brown house scarce a stone's throw from her own home, yet concealed from it by a little rise of land. "We've just come here," he explained. "We used to live in Massachusetts, but 'twas seashore there, just the same."

"And I suppose your ma died on the way here," suggested Mrs. Hardwick.

"Oh, she's been dead years and years," declared the oldest girl. "Longer than any of us can remember but just Danny, and all he remembers is just pa crying and calling us poor, motherless lambs. We didn't have ma's grave in Claxton, but when we come here we teased and teased till pa went off and had her moved here. He always does what we ask him, if we tease long enough."

"Ma's an angel with a gold harp," declared the second girl. "We picked out this place for her because the other grave was so pretty. Is it yours?"

Mrs. Hardwick assented absently. She was considering possible remedies for the intrusion and rejecting them one by one. The devotion which had brought the dust of wife and mother to rest near the new home, touched her. "Let me tie your



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She came to the cemetery, watering-pot and trowel in hand.

hair ribbon, sis, it's coming off," she suggested.

"We brought all the jack-in-the-pulpits we could find because pa's a preacher," explained the youngest child.

It was later than usual when Mrs. Hardwick walked homeward in possession of a considerable fund of assorted information concerning her new neighbors, and much doubt as to her own future course. She wondered whether it would be advisable to call upon the Reverend Mr. Smiles and offer remonstrance.

"I don't know as it would be scarcely proper," she decided. "Single women have to be so careful of their doings. But something has got to be done. I ain't going to sit silent and be imposed upon if he is a preacher of the gospel."

She was still considering the matter when a friend stopped her to make inquiries concerning the newcomers.

"Of course you'll call on him," Mrs. Briggs said confidently. "Charles and I dropped in last evening and other folks mustn't be backward. Oh, yes you will. Widows can do a good many things that would be open to question in maiden women. I wouldn't wonder if you was a real help to him livin' so near with all them children and you tasty in dress. He isn't a regular minister exactly—just a farmer with a call to preach and marry when he gets a chance, and a special gift for funerals. I expect he'll be a real help in the community come camp-meeting time."

Three days later Mrs. Hardwick, her best crape bonnet on her head and determination written upon every feature, sought entrance to the front door of the little brown house. The discovery, only that morning, that her choicest plants had been ruthlessly trampled in an attempt to plant a dilapidated American flag where it would wave impartially over the two graves, had brought matters to a crisis.

The Reverend Israel Smiles met her cordially, in the evident belief that she had come to make a social call. Mrs. Hardwick hesitated, her warlike intentions a little disturbed by the unmistakable friendliness of her reception. Her host was a tall man, whose sturdy figure was rendered ridiculous by the long white

apron tied about its neck. Mrs. Hardwick decided that his years were hardly more than her own.

"The children told me about seeing you up to—up yonder—and how nice and friendly you seemed," he said, as he emptied the large rocker of dolls and dusted it for the guest's occupancy.

Mrs. Hardwick gasped. Her one act of friendliness thus far had been the tying of Rose Amelia's hair ribbon on the occasion of their first meeting.

"I thought I'd better call—" she began, but the Rev. Mr. Smiles, with an engaging smile and a look of preoccupation excused himself.

"An idea for a missionary sermon just came to me," he explained, as he re-entered the room. "I always try to write down my ideas just as fast as they come, for I've had 'em get away before now."

Mrs. Hardwick began again, but a second interruption sent her host to the kitchen. "This is my baking day," he acknowledged. "She—the children's mother—used to consider it was kind of shiftless to bake in the afternoon, but I had to plough this morning. What was you saying, ma'am?"

Mrs. Hardwick resolved to temporize. "Do you use cream o' tartar or bakin' powder?" she inquired, and became at once the interested recipient of various confidences concerning the daily *ménage* of the Smiles family.

She learned that "the children's mother" had considered "molasses sweetnin'" more wholesome for the children and had disapproved of any save "milk empt'in's" bread, which the reverend gentleman frankly admitted he had never attempted.

"I try to do everything just as their mother would want it done," he explained. "But milk empt'in's' is something that seems to need a woman's tact and judgment. Do you make it, ma'am?"

"Milk empt'in's' is all out of fashion," Mrs. Hardwick assured him. "No doubt, if she'd been spared, you'd be living on potato yeast today. I can give you a receipt and some to start it, if you'll send one of the children over."

Mr. Smiles accepted the offer gratefully. "Their mother was one that always kept up with the fashions," he agreed. "And

I don't want the children to miss anything she might have provided."

He turned suddenly to a pile of pink gingham on the table. "Speaking of fashions," he continued, "I s'pose you could tell me all about bias bands, ma'am. I've learned tucks and ruffling, which the two youngest are perfectly satisfied with, but Rose Amelia is kind of high-spirited, and she wants overskirts and bias bands. I was cutting out her new dress when you rapped."

Mrs. Hardwick arose from her seat to take the shears from his hand. "Let me cut out that dress," she commanded. "I learnt the dressmaker's trade years ago, and I can save a good half yard over the way you've laid that pattern on."

He relinquished the work with eager, though apologetic, manner. "I can worry through the housework and the boys' clothes, but this making of dresses has always been a great cross," he admitted.

Mrs. Hardwick snipped the pink gingham with satisfaction. "I don't wonder," she said. "I've often said that women doctors and ministers might be bold and forward and no doubt they was; but mandressmakers was nothing short of meeching."

Mr. Smiles watched her deft manipulation of the shears with satisfaction. "I ain't one that believes in allowing children to fix their whole minds on outward adornment, but I'm kind of liberal," he explained. "Some would say that brown gingham was more modest and better suited to a minister's children, and maybe it is, but the years in which the color of a dress can make a child happy are all too swift in passing. If the Creator didn't believe in pretty colors he wouldn't made the roses red and the lilacs purple. Yes, ma'am, overskirt and bias bands, if you'll be so good and the cloth holds out. It may be a givin' in to sinful pride, for which I'll repent in years to come, but it's my belief folks think more about their clothes if they're dressed shabby than if they're overdressed. I've preached many a sermon with my whole mind on the elbow of my best coat where a worn place was, and when at last it come to patching I left off gesturing altogether for fear of showing that patch. That's going to be handsome,

ma'am. Not puckers enough in the overskirt to look sinful, please, but just enough so Rosie won't feel she looks different from other folks' children. How kind of natural these things come to women folks."

His tone, as he concluded, was abject, and indicated a full consciousness of his masculine limitations. Mrs. Hardwick hastened to re-assure him.

"It's a woman's work," she declared, as she shaped a worldly puff for the pink sleeve. "Hands that are strong enough to guide a plow, as I saw you doing this morning, or brains that's capable of writing sermons for the guiding of immortal souls, is both above such trifling occupations as this."

She had reached her own sunken doorstep, with the more intricate portions of Rose Amelia's dress carefully concealed under her crape-trimmed mantle, before she remembered the unfulfilled purpose of her call."

"Never mind," she decided, as she went about frugal preparations for an early tea. "No doubt it will be easier to speak of when we get better acquainted. Some time when I meet him out in the cemetery, it'll come perfectly natural to suggest moving his Emily a little further away. Poor thing—I suppose she meant well, but it's easy to see she was one of those women without an atom of tact or judgment. I'm glad I could be some little help to the poor man, and I call it real high-minded of him to insist on men'ling the fences in return. I suppose he goes to the cemetery Sundays when he doesn't have a call."

But close observance indicated that neither on Sunday nor any other day did the Reverend Mr. Smiles visit his wife's grave. Neither were professional engagements at fault, for sabbath after sabbath found him and his little flock occupying a quiet corner of the old Seaboro meeting-house, where all invitations from the silver-haired pastor to sit beside him on the hair-cloth sofa of the high pulpit were declined with the excuse that the children might "act out" if left alone.

Mrs. Hardwick puzzled over his apparent neglect of "Emily," as she patiently revived her trampled plants and submitted in silence to fresh depredations, comforting herself, as time passed, with the



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The Reverend Israel Smiles met her cordially.

assurance that "it would never be allowed if their father knew, but far be it from her to make complaint unless it was forced upon her."

Opportunities were not wanting for neighborly intercourse. It having once been established between the large gray house and the little brown one, it flowed on without interruption. Mr. Smiles came in person for the promised yeast, bringing in return a head of lettuce from his garden. Later a substantial offering of mustard greens from the weed sown garden of the old Hardwick house, brought beans and cucumbers from the ministerial garden plot, and Mrs Hardwick's kindly services in remodelling a threadbare coat of the parent's into a Sunday suit for ten-year-old Daniel, was promptly rewarded by the felling of several dead trees upon the Hardwick estate, which were neatly worked into firewood for the Widow Hardwick's kitchen stove.

"To my mind, there's no place where a man's strength shows up to better advantage than when he's cutting down trees," Mrs. Hardwick said admiringly, as from her doorstep she watched the downfall of what had been a mighty oak.

The Reverend Mr. Smiles, warm with labor, paused a moment to beam upon her in response. "Maybe," he said. "But what I've been thinking as I chopped was that a man's strength couldn't be compared with a woman's faculty. That's as fine spun and delicate constructed as that piece of lace you're knitting on."

Mrs Hardwick blushed with pleasure. "I thought 'twould look kind of pretty on Rosie's new blue waist," she said. "I hope you'd be willing for her to accept of it?"

"Certainly, and thank you very kindly, ma'am," replied Mr. Smiles. "Their mother always admired hand-knit lace. I guess Rosie better pick some berries to pay you for it. I may be extravagant in dressing my children, but I've always taught them to pay as they go and not be beholden to anybody, savin' for little kindnesses they can pass along to some one else."

It was early in September that Mr. Smiles one morning approached the gray

house alone. Mrs. Hardwick had seen the children go trooping across the field to the cemetery, and shuddered for the fate of her first purple asters which had blossomed the day before.

"I don't know but what now would be as good a time as any for me to speak my mind," she decided, as she answered the caller's knock. His first words disarmed her.

"It don't seem right for women folks to stay to home too close this fine weather," he explained a little nervously. "I've got a call to tend a funeral over to Chowder Point this afternoon, and I thought maybe 'twould cheer you up some to go along." Mr. Smiles hesitated a little and a boyish color crept over his sunburned face. "I believe you've never been given an opportunity to hear me preach," he added.

Mrs. Hardwick accepted politely. "It would give me much pleasure to go," she said, "if you're sure the mourners wouldn't feel it an intrusion."

Promptly at one o'clock she was assisted to the high wagon seat. The four children running beside the wagon, accompanied them to the first turn in the road and turned back contentedly with the promise of making molasses candy tomorrow.

The road to Chowder Point skirted the wide bay in smooth, sandy levels or climbed rocky hills through groves of fragrant fir trees. The driver checked his willing steed more than once to point out a choice bit of scenery or note the sails of a passing vessel far out at sea.

"I had a call to a city church once," he explained in a burst of confidence. "I suppose I might have come to be a big man if I'd gone. But 'twas inland, and I couldn't bring myself to leave the shore. Ambition ain't everything in life."

"I'm beginning to believe it ain't," agreed the Widow Hardwick.

They rode on in satisfied silence, disturbed only by the waves washing peacefully upon the shore, and a sea gull screaming as he floated past. It was near the little village of Chowder Point that Mr. Smiles spoke again. Ambition always remembered the exact spot, for a huge white boulder by the roadside seemed put there to mark the place.

"I wasn't intending to say it till we went back," he said. "I thought 'twas no more than fair for you to hear me preach before you decided. But you can take back anything you say now if the sermon and remarks shouldn't be satisfactory. I guess it's foreordained to be, without you've some objection. I believe there's one woman made for every man, though more or less of them gets mated up wrong through their own blindness. There isn't any doubt in my mind that you're the one for me, though. I was foreordained to experiences for my regeneration before I found you. How do you feel about it?"

Ambition drew a long breath behind her crape veil. "I don't know but what you're right," she said, with all the shyness of eighteen.

The funeral was held in the little church at Chowder Point for the deceased had been a prominent man. Ambition sat through the long afternoon hours listening to the preacher's voice with a growing pride of possession. The musical selections freely interspersed between prayer, scripture reading, sermon, and remarks seemed to her futile and unnecessary interruptions.

"It was fine," she assured him, as they drove homeward. "Only—I'm glad you asked me before. I don't know as I could have had the presumption to say 'yes' after hearing that sermon."

"Oh, that wasn't much," replied the preacher modestly. "I'm glad to know you enjoyed it, though. It come to me right in the middle of it that maybe I'd made a mistake asking you to come. It didn't remind you of—of—your first husband's funeral, did it?"

Ambition drew away from him and the enthusiasm died out of her voice. "Oh, no," she said stiffly. "That was ever so different."

It had been a foregone conclusion with all Seaboro, which had kept careful watch of the affair from the very first. And all Seaboro kindly approved, interesting itself deeply in preparations for an early wedding.

"Of course, you'll unpack your nice furniture and furnish up the house now," Mrs. Briggs suggested.

Ambition was not sure. "I don't feel that minister's families ought to be too grand," she said evasively.

This remark being repeated many times in Seaboro came at last to the attention of the Reverend Mr. Smiles.

"Fix up the house as nice as you want to," he said. "Everybody knows how liberal I am towards worldliness, and your marrying a poor minister needn't prevent your using all your nice things. I'll get a hammer and open them boxes for you now."

Ambition drew a deep breath.

"Mr. Smiles," she said desperately, "I haven't got any nice furniture. I never said I had, but I let people believe it and that was just as bad. There isn't a thing in those boxes but rocks and old newspapers, though I paid freight on them all the way from Pennsylvania when I'd all but spent my last money for that headstone. I didn't mind deceiving all Seaboro, but I can't go on and marry into a minister's family with a burden of untruth on my soul."

Mr. Smiles' face expressed relief.

"I'm not sorry," he admitted. "I've been afraid all along that I'd be accused of marrying for worldly gain, and to tell the truth, I've worried more than a little about that furniture, for fear the children'd scar it up. You know what children are, and we wouldn't want to keep nagging them all the time. As for spending your last money for the headstone, that shows a devotion which argues well for my future happiness."

"No, it doesn't," returned Ambition, bravely. "It was only devotion to my own sinful pride. There isn't any grave there really; not because of drowning or accident, but because there never was anybody to put in it. It was all a make-believe, because I saw how much easier time widows had, and I couldn't make up my mind to come back to Seaboro a poor, forlorn old maid, to be patronized by every married woman and snubbed by all the young girls with steady company. So I fixed up the mourning and bought the headstone. I don't suppose anybody'd realize, that hadn't been both old maid and widow, what a difference that piece of marble and them few crape trimmed

clothes made in Seaboro. But 'twas all a make-believe. I'm not anybody's widow, really, but only Deacon Hardwick's old maid daughter."

The Reverend Mr. Smiles was silent. Ambition drew off the simple ring he had given her.

"Of course, I expect to break it off now," she said. "I think I'll probably go away again. Only first, I'll take up that headstone and you can have the whole corner for Emily."

Mr. Smiles interrupted. "I wouldn't do that," he said slowly. "Because, you see, there isn't any Emily there—either. Oh, yes, of course there was one once."

"Where is she?" demanded Ambition.

"In heaven, I hope," replied Mr. Smiles solemnly. "Some might say that was the crowning point of my liberalness, and it may be I am going too far. But I never yet 'tended a funeral where I couldn't find some ground for assuring the mourners of a reunion hereafter, and I ain't going to deny the mother of my children the privilege I've more than once extended to a drowned sailor whose very name I never knew. Besides, it was six years that I hadn't seen or heard from her till I got the notice of her death and there's no telling what changes of heart she'd undergone in that time. I ain't blaming Emily. No doubt she did as well as she could, being high-spirited and not adapted to be a preacher's wife. You see, she left us—me and the children."

"Left her own children?" repeated Ambition, in horror.

He nodded.

"Danny was four and Kate Sophia a baby in the cradle," he said. "She always was high-spirited and fond of excitement, and there was another man with more style and money than me. It's been

the aim of my life, so far, to keep it from the children. They've thought all along she died years ago, but it had only just happened when we come here. I'd always denied their teasing for a grave, but after that I didn't see any harm in humoring them. I brought a box—it had her wed-



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He braced himself against the door frame.

ding dress in it and some letters she wrote me when we were keeping company. I never thought whether it was right or not, only what would make the children happiest, and I will say I never saw them enjoy anything as they do that grave."

He arose, bracing himself against the door frame.

"Put back the ring," he commanded. "I told you we was made for each other, and I guess 'twas true. As for the others—you can do as you think best about John's grave, but Emily's is going to stay, and the children shall keep the notion

they've invented of a true and loving mother.

"It's deceiving, I know. That's why I quit preaching Sunday sermons; and perhaps you noticed over to the Point I didn't go into the pulpit but stood one side. A man with a burden of pretension on his soul isn't fit for the pulpit. Weddings and funerals are different. A man that's seen shipwreck in his own married life isn't by no means unfitted to steer others into port, and one that's faced worse troubles than death don't lack for consoling words to speak at a funeral. I hope you don't think I'm over-presuming in these two last?"

"Yours is the real humility that sacrifices your own principles for the good of others," Ambition replied admiringly. "But mine was only sinful worldliness that wanted to be thought more interesting than it was. I guess I'll take John's stone away and set it in the woodshed chamber. Maybe it could be chiseled over and save buying one some day. But we'll leave

Emily, and the children needn't ever know. I don't call it deceiving. You had her and you lost her, and the grave represents her children's memory of her. I shall live in the hope of seeing you in the pulpit again, some day."

"They do say that Amby Hardwick's never been married at all till this day," whispered one Seaboro dame to another, as they came out of church after the simple ceremony.

The other nodded. "Amby explained it all to me and Silas when she asked us to tea one night," she answered. "And I didn't blame her a mite. Amby said she shouldn't presumed to do it if she hadn't had an offer while she was out there, which she didn't see fit to accept. But it gave her a right to choose which she'd be, married or single, and, anyhow, as I whispered to her just now, when I shook hands with her and the elder, she's married now, headstone or no headstone."

An Invitation from the Ormsbys

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

Katherine and I, on a certain shining morning in June, were driving through the park in a hansom. It is very seldom that I can indulge in so great a luxury. Katherine, who is the dearest girl in the world, knows this, and she always protests when I suggest a spin in "a two-wheeled heaven," as some wonderfully modern poet has called it. For she knows I am ridiculously poor and that when I take her hansoming I will also give her violets to wear. I don't know why, but I always think the two go together.

The crocuses and tulips, laid out in mathematical rows so that they resembled nothing more than the audience at the Hippodrome, were smiling at us in a friendly way as we went leisurely by. Perhaps they were expecting us to perform for them. I almost thought I heard them applaud.

"I had a most laughable experience the other evening," I said.

"You're always having funny things happen to you," answered Katherine.

"I think you might say original instead of funny—it would sound more dignified."

"What do you care about dignity, dear?"

"Nothing; but I do care about originality."

"Was your experience so very original?"

"Not so very. It might have happened to any young bachelor. It won't be apt to happen to me again. You know June is the time we set, and—here we are in mid-April." I couldn't resist leaning over and pressing my lips to Katherine's cheek, although it was morning, and numerous other happy young lovers seemed to be out, as well as we. Katherine pretended to be a little provoked; but I told her that those in other hansoms had probably not noticed us, being so absorbed in their own joy.

"You have heard me speak of the

Ormsbys," I said, getting back to practical things. "It was Ralph Ormsby who married that awfully rich Miss Meredith. Rich people always seem blest with beautiful names, don't they?"

"But Mr. Ormsby was poor, and Ormsby isn't a bad name."

"True; but he's rich now, and his name perhaps made him so. I wonder if Miss Meredith would have dreamed of marrying a Mr. Snooks!"

"For goodness' sake, dear, tell me your story. See! we've passed the Casino already."

"The Ormsbys have been honeymooning in Florida all winter, so I haven't seen them at all. In fact, I've never met Ralph's wife. So when they came back to this wilderness which people call New York, they sent me an invitation to dine with them, at the fashionable hour of eight. I am very fond of people who dine so late, but I don't know very many."

"When the evening at last came, I wished the hour set had been seven. I found myself quite foolishly excited at the idea of meeting Mrs. Ormsby, who I had heard was very beautiful and charming—"

"Tom!" Katherine interrupted.

"—and, besides," I went on cruelly, "I came home from the office at half-past four because of a slight headache—a nervous headache it was, of course. You know, I am awfully silly about going out to big dinners. I don't believe I'll ever get over that boyish enthusiasm for a really smart dinner, at the home of someone I really like."

"But very few men would have the courage to admit it. That's why I like you, blessed boy. You're so charmingly frank."

(I shall not tell you what I said to Katherine after that little speech of hers!)

"Well, dear, as I said, I found myself so overwrought that I could hardly wait for eight o'clock to come. I would lie down for a few moments and then nervously pop up again and ring for a bromo-seltzer. And I think I called you up on the telephone at least seven times that afternoon."

"I remember," said Katherine. "And I was lying down, getting ready for a theater party. It was most inconsiderate of you."

"Perhaps, dear; but you must recollect that I was not myself."

"And that's why you called me up! Well, well, another time—"

"Now don't, dear, I beg of you! This is April, we're in love and a hansom, and you are wearing violets. You simply can't be cross with me!"

"I won't, blessed boy. Go on."

"Finally I did manage to doze off for a little while; but after my telephoning and constant imbibing of bromo-seltzer I must have consumed more time than I thought. For when I awakened with a start it was after seven o'clock, and the Ormsbys live on Riverside Drive, very far up, too. It's quite a trip from the Olgonnygarrie, you know."

"I jumped up hastily and began to shave. That consumed ten minutes, and I cut myself, besides. Then for my best shirt! I wanted to wear one of those with the beautiful fancy bosoms you are so fond of, dear. The first one I laid my hands on was slightly frayed, and I cast it aside at once. Number two was just as bad, and so was number three. Then I was in despair—"

"Because you have only three of that particular kind, haven't you, dear?" Katherine was laughing; but she is so adorable when she laughs, and I could not be angry.

"So I had to take out a common—or—garden shirt, such as every man wears. Then for my real pearl studs."

"Those I gave you, dear?"

"Those you gave me, dear, of course! They are beautiful, Katherine, but—really, I have never understood the mechanism of them—that wonderful little thing which you're supposed to push on the back—"

"Don't tell me—!"

"Yes, I broke one of them, dear. Perhaps it was because I was so nervous. It's being fixed now. Then I searched wildly for my imitation pearls. I couldn't find them, and the hour was growing late. Time flies so when one is dressing for dinner. I'm sorry, Katherine, but I swore."

"You know I wouldn't give two pins for a man who didn't. And under the circumstances, you were justified, I must say. Go on."

"There is little more to tell. I found no studs, and there was not time to ring your brother up and ask him to send his down to me."

"Couldn't you have borrowed some from one of those fashionable clerks at the Olgonnygarrie? They dress so beautifully, you tell me."

"I wouldn't have dared ask them. Besides, I never thought of that."

"Tom, you occasionally lose your sense of humor, even as you lose your studs!"

"There is nothing that makes a person more angry than to be told that. You know how proud I am of my sense of humor. Pearl studs—even those you gave me—are not a circumstance compared with it . . . It was utterly impossible, dear, for me to get to the Ormsbys. The hour had got to be ten minutes to eight, and I was still fuming and fussing about like a firecracker which hasn't quite made up its mind to explode."

"Then suddenly I was seized with a brilliant idea. I would get back into my tweeds, take a car and ride as far as I could, and then telephone the Ormsbys that I had been motoring in the afternoon and was stalled in Westchester County. Have you ever considered what a splendid excuse a motor accident is for not keeping an engagement? And your hostess will always willingly forgive you, for it's so nice to turn from the receiver and announce to the other guests that Mr. So-and-So can't possibly come because his Panhard has broken down!"

"Silly boy! You men think far more of those things than we women. Mr. Ormsby must know that you don't own a machine, even if his wife doesn't. Do you mean to tell me that you really told such a—a—falsehood, Tom?"

"I'm sorry, dear, that I must. To have stayed away from the dinner would have been impossible, unless I sent some valid excuse. It wasn't my fault, you must remember, that I broke my real pearls and lost my imitation ones. And, I couldn't go in my tweeds—except later, unless I concocted the plan I've told you of."

"Oh! that was your scheme, was it? You wanted to meet Mrs. Ormsby so badly that you were willing to drop in later on a smart dinner-party in your tweeds! It *was* a clever idea, though, Tom, I must admit."

"But the worst is to come, Katherine. Ormsby answered the telephone, and misunderstood my message. He just took it for granted that a break-down meant a very serious accident, and telegraphed my poor mother, in Philadelphia, that I had been hurt in a motor collision. He hadn't understood me when I said I would drop in later to meet his wife. He hung up the receiver, evidently, and I was talking to empty air for three minutes, rattling off my fool excuse."

"It served you right, Tom dear. I'm sorry for the shock to your mother, though."

"If there was one it didn't last long. I arrived at the Ormsbys at ten, in time for a liqueur and one of Ralph's ripping cigars and his telegram had just gone. To send one of my own was a simple matter. But the worstest is yet to come, Katherine. The Carletons happened in on the Ormsbys for a call, immediately after I had telephoned to Ralph. The fools—I've always hated that insipid young couple anyhow—told everybody that they had seen me, at eight-thirty, rid-u-p-town in a car. Mrs. Carleton took particular delight in telling them that she had happened to be glancing from the window of her carriage."

"So you had to tell the truth of the matter, after all?" Katherine was laughing.

"Yes, dear, and the humiliating experience perhaps did me some good. I'll never speak to those Carletons again, though."

"You've forgotten, dear, that you have a sense of humor!"

"Hush, Katherine! Here we are at Claremont. What a treat it is for me to be lunching with you up here!"

And I pressed the hand of the dearest girl in the world as I helped her to alight from our "two-wheeled heaven."



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

I sat down on the wheelbarrow and thought it over.

Miss Primrose and the Patient

BY MARJORIE BENTON COOKE

I was out in the garden snipping the asters and pursuing slugs, which were also snipping the asters, in an ardent anxiety to keep the lovely spot in perfect order during my temporary stewardship while the Youngloves were up north. And because on this particular morning the air seemed permeated with the very essence of distilled summer, and because I felt that I looked like an Elizabeth Shippen Greene illustration in my pink gown and garden hat—I sang:

"Alas, that Spring should vanish with the
rose,

That youth's sweet scented manuscript
should close—

Here an illusive slug caused me to lose the tune, and just as I captured the enemy and prepared to begin again—a mellow baritone voice from beyond the garden wall took up my song and finished it—

"The nightingale that in the forest sang,
Ah, whence and whither flown again—who
knows?"

I dropped my shears in my astonishment and stared hard at the wall, but there was nothing to be seen, just vine-covered wall.

"It must be the Monster," thought I to

myself, and considered. The Youngloves always referred to their next door neighbor as "the Monster," and I had a distinct memory of the list of crimes he had committed:

Item, built a wall and shut off the view.

Item, built a stable right on the edge of the Younglove's garden.

Item, imported an automobile that puffed in at all hours of the night.

There could be no reasonable doubt that the perpetrator of these outrages must be an unsuitable acquaintance, and yet, it seemed too bad to waste the Elizabeth Shippen Greene effect on the desert air. I snipped toward the wall and tried again softly:

"I sometimes think that never blows the rose so red—

As where some buried Caesar bled."

Here I effected a dramatic pause, but there was no response. He had retired, whoever he was—some friend of the Monster's possibly, for the Monster was old, and that voice was young—ergo—it was not the voice of the Monster.

There is something tantalizing about a wall. It gives curiosity a fillip, it makes peep-Johns of the most sedate. I felt distinctly annoyed at the height and thickness of that wall. I got up on the wheelbarrow and looked over boldly. It was lovely—so lovely that I said "Oh!" involuntarily.

"You like it, then?" said an amused voice.

I started guiltily. Under an arbor of vines there was a man lying in a steamer chair with a rug over him. He smiled at me, and I conquered my first impulse to drop off the wheelbarrow. He was not an old man.

"I like it very well," I said, "it's too bad to shut it in."

"It shuts prying people out."

"Not always," I replied.

"Not always, I'm glad to say," he added civilly. "Won't you descend? I'll get you a ladder."

"Don't think of it," I protested. "I only wanted to see what kind of a Monster inhabited this preserve."

"Monster?"

"Yes. The old man who owns this place."

"Oh, that old man! What kind of Monster did you picture him?"

"Well, a good deal of growl, and some tail and hoof! I was a trifle surprised when my song was snatched away."

"Oh, you didn't expect a singing Monster, then? I'm afraid I'm a disappointment—I'm not up to—"

"You? I don't know anything about you—I only know about old Peabody."

"Indeed? And would it be impertinent to ask what you know about old Peabody?"

"You see, I'm just spending a month here while the Youngloves are camping up north, and before they left, Mrs. Younglove warned me against peddlers, slugs, and the Monster."

"How nice of her!"

"Yes. She said he was a barn-building person, who thought he owned the universe; that he kept dogs, and stomping horses, and puffing automobiles—"

"Poor old Peabody. Sort of a village nuisance!"

"In short I was to beware of him as the plague!"

"Whereupon you climb upon his wall and peer into his lair."

"I always like to look before I beware! Why do you visit this horrid, man-eating Monster?"

"Why do I visit—Oh—"

Whereupon the stranger broke into irrepressible laughter that shook the leaves overhead.

"That's the question I've been asking myself. Why do I spend so much time with this tiresome, boresome old Peabody? You've no idea what a relief it is to see a new face."

"Haven't you any other friends?"

Again he laughed. He seemed very easily amused.

"A few, but I can't get away from old Peabody. You see, I've been sick—oh, quite sick for a long time. That's why I look like an escaped convict," he added, taking off his cap and showing his close-cropped hair. "Old Peabody has put up with me, and humored me—"

"That's the only decent thing I've heard of him. Are you better? How long have you been out?"

"This is only my third day out, which



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

"Are you as tall as the wall, Miss—Miss—"

accounts for my not rising when you came to call."

"Oh, but I didn't come to call—" I said indignantly.

"You see, I'm so ridiculously shaky yet; typhoid is a thorough-going disease, that leaves one bankrupt of everything except breath."

"Well, that's the only really essential thing."

"I beg pardon, but are you as tall as the wall, or are you standing on something, Miss—Miss—?"

"I'm standing on the wheelbarrow," I answered indignantly. As tall as the wall, indeed!

"I'm sure the wheelbarrow is not a comfortable understanding; can't you be induced to—"

"No, I must go back to the slugs."

"Happy slugs!"

I began a careful descent.

"Oh, I say, Miss—Miss—Miss Primrose—" he called. I smiled on my side of the wall.

"Yes?"

"Would you—could you—I'm having tea at five, all alone here—could you—?"

"Certainly not," I answered haughtily, and dropped off the wheelbarrow. I thought I heard a faint laugh as I went back to my slugs, but I may have been mistaken.

At five o'clock I happened to be wandering about the garden. There was nothing strange about that; five o'clock is a lovely time to be in a garden! I thought I heard voices beyond the wall; probably the Monster and the Wounded Knight were having tea. I wandered quite close to the wall, to tie up a vine, when a tinkle above me made me look up. A tray with a tall glass of iced punch, and some wafers, with some crisp nasturtiums laid across them, miraculously appeared upon the wall. I had to laugh, it looked so Arabian Nightsy, and then I stood on tiptoe and slipped the tray off, and sat on the wheelbarrow and sipped the punch. I picked my biggest, whitest aster, and put it on the tray before I slid it back.

"It is a most unsocial way to take tea, isn't it?" said a voice from the other side.

"Oh dear," I said, "I didn't know you

were there. How did you know I was here?"

"Thou Wall—oh Wall, Oh sweet and lovely Wall,
Show me thy chink to blink thro' with mine eyen!"

"How did you know I was here?" I repeated.

"Oh wicked Wall, thro' whom I see no bliss, Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!"

This was too much; I got upon the wheelbarrow straightway.

"Are you going to quote the entire prologue?" I demanded.

"Ah! now this is something like! The loaf of bread, the jug of wine we have at hand, we only need the—Thou!"

"How did you know I was here?"

"Dear me, Miss Primrose, there is a oneness of purpose, a sad repetition in your conversation—"

I scowled fiercely at him, and that sobered him up, all but the corners of his mouth. He leaned forward and looked at me solemnly.

"I said tea at five, so, of course, I expected you."

"Oh!" I said, aghast at his insolence, and then he actually—he actually laughed at me. Whereupon I forgot myself; I seized the white aster and threw it at him with all my might, and jumped down.

"Many, many thanks, Miss Primrose!" the horrid thing called after me.

For two days the garden was neglected; the bugs and slugs had a perfect debauch. The third day I decided that I was making too much of a concession to my impertinent neighbor, so I armed myself, basket, shears, and all, and sallied forth.

I worked for an hour or more silently, though I was terribly tempted to sing. As I bent over the marigold bed a sunflower, flung by an unseen hand, hit me on the head. I started up, expecting a truant boy to appear, and then I saw a white paper tied to the stem.

I opened it and read:

Dear Miss Primrose—

I prostrate myself at your feet; I become as a slug beneath your shears! These three days of punishment have caused a relapse. Couldn't you take pity on a very lonely, sick man, and make a day brighter, by looking over the wall?

I sat down on the wheelbarrow and thought it over. It really was a nice note, the tone of remorse seemed sincere; after all, one must humor the sick, so I climbed up. I will say he looked pleased; he seemed to have grown better looking, too.

"Angel of Mercy!" he cried and half rose.

"Sit still," I ordered. "You don't deserve it."

"I deserve nothing but rebukes, and I rely on your charity not to administer them."

He was really diplomatic—the creature—and the aster I had thrown at his head was beside him in a vase, looking a little the worse for wear.

"You look better," I said.

"I am well—now. Have you any idea what twenty-four hours of eating, sleeping, and looking at the sky, can mean to an active man? Yesterday I thought I would go mad! And when I realized that you had deserted me forever—"

"Where is old Peabody, doesn't he amuse you?"



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

Out in the garden snipping the asters.

"Amuse me? Mercy, no, he bores me nearly to death. And he watches me all the time."

"Watches you? Why?"

"He's a terrible woman hater, and if he should find out about you—"

"I'm not afraid of him," I remarked, in a tone of bravado.

"He's out this afternoon, exercising hoof and tail!"

"Well, I'm glad you're rid of him. Why don't you read?"

"Doctor won't let me; eyes are weak. Books and booklets everywhere, and not a word to read! It you knew of anyone who could read aloud—"

"It does seem to be someone's Christian duty," I admitted.

"It does. There are so few Christians these days."

I got to the top of the wall, just as he got to his feet.

"If you don't sit still, I won't come."

He sank back at once, and I vaulted over and marched toward him. He rose and waited for me. I sat down quickly, for I was rather surprised at his height and looks and all—close to, and perhaps he was surprised, too; he stared, rather.

"Bliss Carman—Chesterton—Pater—Stevenson—what are you going to choose?" I said, in a business-like tone. "You choose."

I read some of the Songs of Bohemia that so tingle with summer.

"How delightfully you read," he said.

I read the Stevenson Essay on Idlers. It was very satisfactory to have him like all the points I liked best. Time flew; I read. We discussed and argued and disagreed—and agreed. All at once a sound

came from the direction of old Peabody's house.

"Great Scott! the Monster!" I cried, springing up.

"Well, what of it?"

"If he should find me here," I said, making for the wall. He came after me.

"But you said you weren't afraid of him," he asserted, helping me up.

"I'm not," I said promptly, from the vantage point of the wall-top. "But I—I—"

"Miss Primrose, it has been perfect," he whispered. "I'll slip a note into the vines here, to let you know when the Monster is out again! Thanks—thanks—"

I dropped into the garden, and ran to my house, for there were indubitable sounds of the fire-breathing Monster's return.

From that day on, two or three times a day, the vine on the wall needed attention. It was a satisfactory vine, it fairly blossomed

white flowers in cocked hat shapes. But beyond the wall I ventured not again, in spite of appeals from my Wounded Knight, until at last, in despair, he invaded my realm, and most of his waking hours were spent in my "Garden of Enchantment," as he called it. There was always the delightful necessity of outwitting old Peabody, and our servants, for we didn't want to be spied upon, so we plotted like children, and time wore away.

One white moonlight night, when it was indeed a garden of enchantment, I spied among the vines in vain, and all at once it came to me, what a fool's Paradise I was living in: how all my days were one thought of him, my nights one dream of him. And who was this Wounded Knight, who in



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSO

"Behold the humbled Monster."

four short weeks, had stormed the citadel of my stout heart? It was absurd—it must stop, I must see no more of him—

"There is such a whiteness in your garden, Miss Primrose, that I can't be sure, whether you are you, or only a white aster!" said the well-known voice.

"No, I am not I," I said bravely, right out of my thoughts, "I am a Strange Person whom you do not know."

He vaulted the wall and bowed.

"Then, Strange Person, may I introduce myself? I am—"

"You must come in the front gate, with a letter of introduction or else the Strange Person will not admit you."

"I don't want her to, I shall not like her. What has become of Miss Primrose?"

"She woke—up and went away."

He walked beside me silently, and we sat down on a low bench. The moon shone through a soft white mist that shut off all the world beyond. My Knight leaned on his knee, looking at me, and there was that in his eyes that made it hard for me to breathe.

"Primrose, dear Primrose," my Knight said, and laid his hand on mine, "it is all over."

"Yes, I know," I said, and started at my own sob.

"Old Peabody has found us out!"

"Peabody? How could he? And what if he has? What right has he to interfere with us?"

"Just the right of—being Peabody. Just because he knows how little worthy I am to be your Knight—the Knight you've healed and made so whole, only to wound again so sore."

"Wound?"

"Yes, in his heart of hearts!"

"My poor Knight," I said, and put my hand on his hair.

"Don't; I know your divine pity, but tonight I've had it out with Peabody. He has reminded me how selfish I am, how little used to women and their ways, especially to a flower-woman like yourself; how I worked on your sympathy, through my illness, how I took advantage of your youth and sweetness; how I had let myself love you this way, when I had no right—"

I sprang up and stood before him.

"How dare he?" I cried. "How dared that execrable, vicious, interfering old Peabody say such things as that to you? How dared he? Oh, my Knight—my Knight, you didn't take advantage of me; I knew the danger from the minute I looked over the wall, and I risked it—I—I—"

My hands were caught up in his.

"Primrose, my blessed Primrose, did you let yourself care, too? Did this madness come to you?"

My hands crept up until they met behind his head, and then my Knight kissed me. Ages passed—ages of bliss, and all dreamed-of things—and then at last I said:

"I'm so happy that I can almost forgive the Monster—but not quite. I must meet him and tell him—"

My Knight laughed, rose, and bowed before me.

"Behold the tamed, the humbled Monster, minus tail and hoof and growl!"

"You mean? You M-E-A-N—?"

"Sweet Prim—the Monster, and your Knight—were one!"

The Reform of Hunch Bagan

BY HUGH PENDEXTER

Mr. William Bilks, alias "Slinky Bill," swarthy of countenance and repellent of face, paused at the corner and looked back after the slouching figure of a man in a red sweater. He knew it was "Hunch" Bagan, and yet it puzzled him that "Hunch" should be sober. He even

forgot for the moment that he ought to be angry with his former pal, when he remembered a scene up in Monroe County, where "Hunch" turned state's evidence, and only escaped Auburn prison by sending his mates there for long terms. Mr. Bilks had always treasured the remem-

brance in his mind and had sworn that once free, and wise enough to keep away from the banks that are under the protection of the American Bankers' Protective Association and policed by the Pinkertons, he would find time to locate "Hunch" and even up the score. But the spectacle of "Hunch" sober and evidently intent on business eliminated all thoughts of vengeance for the moment, and it was only as the sweater threatened to be lost in turning a corner that Mr. Bilks remembered and quickly dogged the soft-footed renegade until the chase ended in a tall tenement house.

"Livin' up here, eh?" growled Mr. Bilks, as he passed the building and noted the number. "It's a long time since I done that dip, but 'Hunch,' I has a long mem'ry, t'ank heavens! An' we's goin' ter settle dat little account afore youse leave old New York. Now wot has that bloke under his hat? Sober? An' in de mornin'? He must have a fat lay, an' I reckon he'll stand fer a pipe."

A casual mingling in Steinheimer's saloon on the corner brought forth the information that "Hunch" had been hiding up in that vicinity for several days and incidentally eschewing the strong waters. This settled Slinky Bill's determination, and as he had no immediate job in sight he engaged a room in a nearby lodging house and allowed his beard to grow until he looked like a cross between an anarchist and a hedge fence. In this way he came to learn of all the exits and entrances of his quondam pal, and from several trips in his wake, to a certain section of the Long Island shore, he decided some game was on, whereby a summer home was scheduled to wake up and find the larger portion of its furnishings missing. One day "Hunch" drove out among the back alleys and kitchen approaches on a meat cart, after toasting the driver into an acute state of insensibility, and it needed no second sight to tell Mr. Bilks that the land was being spied out in the old approved style.

Once "Hunch's" hunting grounds had been located Slinky Bill was content to remain unseen but where he could observe his enemy's comings and

goings, knowing instinctively the hour of the killing had not yet arrived. The long, spring-night vigils reminded Slinky of his youth and his trust in "Hunch," of the time when he thought it the correct thing to hunt in pairs and have abiding trust in his mate. The belief of those days had been destroyed by the one act of the erring one up in Monroe County, and now Slinky followed the moonlit trails alone, with no one to call on him for a share of the loot, with none to play him double. If the memories saddened the old cracksman it in no way weakened his purpose to have an accounting with his false comrade. If anything, it intensified his desire, albeit, he had grace to regret that the honorable calling in which he was numbered a bright light should be disrupted by private hate. He appreciated that "Hunch" was playing an eminently legitimate game in warring upon organized society, yet those four years in Auburn prison could not be cried down for the good of the order.

So he watched, and one night he knew "Hunch" was to make his strike. No sooner had the traitor left his hiding place and made for Long Island than Slinky Bill was at his heels, winning his sobriquet anew by the silent manner in which he kept pace and dogged his quarry.

First "Hunch" entered a summer house, occupied by a few domestics, and after rambling over the structure at his leisure, reappeared, carrying something in a small canvas bag that occasionally gave forth a mellow clink. Then another house was entered and the same fruitful exit was observed by the lone watcher.

"Fer de love of—Say, beau, but youse certainly makin' a real clean up dis time," muttered Slinky Bill under his breath, forced to admire the workmanlike way in which "Hunch" was covering the circuit.

At last even "Hunch" grew weary of well doing and paused undecided whether to take in the big house with the gable roof, or to go home. After thinking it over under a shade tree for some minutes he evidently compromised with himself by stealing away to a less pre-

tentious section of the town and halting back of a neat frame house.

"Why, say," gasped Slinky, "dis is jest cigaret an' beer money. He can't be down so low as ter tap dat humble joint."

But "Hunch" evidently possessed the broad philosophy that looks on all netted fish as good for something, for after a quick survey of the moonlit premises he sneaked to the kitchen window and was soon inside the house. Mr. Bilks felt a wave of righteous indignation sweep over him as he swung his gum shoes over the sill and carefully kept a few paces behind the commercialized burglar. There was more risk in a small home like this, he well knew, than in one of those big barn-like places he had already entered; but as far as any commotion was concerned the two crooks might have been moonbeams, or falling leaves, so easily did they move from room to room. Then "Hunch" deftly weighed the silverware in the dining room and would have grunted in disgust if he had been an amateur, for the stuff was all plated. He had not need to turn on his lantern to ascertain this. But as he was preparing to softly retreat his small eyes caught a glimpse of a toy bank, the property of some youngster, and rather than leave entirely without compensation he gingerly picked it up and knocking out the bottom turned a handful of pennies and silver into his great coat pocket.

"Fer de love of—Why, say, dat four-flush is breakin' de kiddy's bank," moaned Slinky Bill, overcome to find even an enemy in his profession playing so low and onery a game.

Then as the hunted one turned to drift as silently as a shadow to the window Mr. Bilks anticipated him, and as the robber of tots reached the ground he was met with a stunning blow from a chunk of lead, fastened to a strip of leather.

"If youse had been true blue ter de callin' youse would have got off wid jest a

touch fer de stuff. But I can't stand ter see a man sneak t'ings on a baby," commented Mr. Bilks, standing over the prostrate form and listening to learn if any alarm had been given.

All was as still within as the blackness of the garden wall and after removing the bulky canvas bags from his old betrayer's pockets Mr. Bilks again entered the kitchen window and made for the dining room. There producing his lantern, he carefully counted the pennies and nickels, abstracted so short a time ago from the little bank, and silently replaced them piece by piece.

"Jest a doller an' forty-tree cents," he growled. "An' ter t'ink dat one of us would sink his manhood, as de mission guy says, fer dat!"

Then he fumbled in his pockets and at last produced three shining silver dollars. "Mebbe de warden frisked it from some poor devil afore dealin' it out ter me, but so far as I'se concerned it's dead honest an' I reckon de bank needs it more 'n I does." And the broad discs went to join their humble brethren.

With this charitable errand done Mr. Bilks noiselessly retraced his soft steps and emerged in the moonlight just as "Hunch" began to show signs of returning to reason. "Come along," he growled, catching the prostrate form by the collar and dragging him out to the road. "Come along, youse baby's burglar. It goes again de grain ter leave youse where 'e cops can pinch youse. But when youse wakes up an' misses dat bit of stuff from de big bug's house I hopes youse will swear off dis Chris'mas tree work an' reform. Gawd knows when a big live man sinks ter dis dat room fer a reform is come."

And as the moon watched Mr. Bilks wend his care-free way homeward toward the big city, laboriously carrying several bags of clinking stuff, the five-year-old in the home of the ribbon-counter clerk dreamed on of saving up his pennies until he could buy a pony.

The Wicked Waste at Wilkinson's

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

The National Thread Concern had, in its wisdom, done all things save two. One of these was to stock up with all the raw cotton it might lay its hands upon, for the purpose of turning out manufactured thread for the entire solar system. The other, was to buy out, or freeze out, Wilkinson, of Monroe. The combination could not buy him out, for Wilkinson, in his wisdom, would not sell. Wilkinson had been a pioneer in thread manufacture in America. He had started his career in Paisley; he was completing it in Monroe. He had begun with the caution of his forbears, feeling his way carefully, manufacturing modestly, but well. And the time had come when the name of Wilkinson was a household word in America; when "W. W. W."—Wilkinson's labelled spool—was found in every housewife's basket. The time had come when Wilkinson himself, grown old and prosperous, had been caught in the spirit of American enterprise; had enlarged his plant; had mortgaged it to do so; had increased his force, and thrust himself into debt to do it; had staked his every dollar, in order that he might get millions in return.

"It's all for Aline," he told himself. "Aline must be the richest girl in Monroe. All for Aline."

Aline was his daughter: a girl with a wonderful eye, who had come down through the years with him, hand in hand. It was to Aline that old Wilkinson confided his dreams, foretold the future vastness of his enterprise. And in the midst of it all this thread trust had loomed up, darkening the horizon, casting lustful glances toward the big plant of Wilkinson at Monroe. For the first time in his career Wilkinson paused. His plant stood hypothecated to his mortgagees; and every dollar of the loan had gone into the clean new buildings by the river, and into the big chimney that stood, a Cleopatra's needle, towering above its fellows, tall and stark and slender against the evening sky. Wilkinson had refused the offer of the

thread concern, alluring as it seemed to be.

"Not till I die," he told them. "When I die, you can have everything I've got—for cash." To himself he whispered: "Cash for Aline; Aline must be rich." And the trust went back to the borough of Manhattan, disappointed and disgruntled. It put its many heads together.

"Then we'll have to freeze him out," it said. It started in. Freezing out is not a thing to be done on paper, or overnight. To the trust it meant that it must by slow, sure means, and by business methods, undersell Wilkinson until he was insolvent. If the trust could sell thread everywhere, and Wilkinson could sell it nowhere, then Wilkinson's business must go by the board. But Wilkinson had come from Paisley, and the trust didn't know him very well. The trust called in Bilsland, its broker. "We've got to bear cotton," it told him. "We want, eventually, to buy all there is to sell, but at its bottom price."

"You couldn't have chosen a better time," said, Bilsland, the broker. "Cotton has been steady, but there have been one or two unfounded rumors whose strengthening will send it down, and—"

"If we sell short?" remarked the trust to Bilsland. The broker held up his hands.

"Everything will go down, down, down to smash," he answered.

"Can you get cotton down to four?" they asked.

"It's ten now," answered Bilsland; "with you behind me, of course I can get it down to four."

"Get it down," they told him, "and then—buy everything in sight. When we buy raw at four," they said to themselves, "we can put spool cotton on the market for nothing a spool, and make a fortune on it, too."

Day after day Bilsland stepped into the mart and sold cotton. Not too much, for sales without cotton meant deliveries of cotton later; but just enough to make the already cheap commodity a drug on the market. The failure of Pliny, the bull, of two weeks before, aided Bilsland materi-

ally, and without difficulty he drove the price to six. For three days it remained at six, and then growing desperate, Bilsland began to sell with a confidence that had its effect.

There was a rush; everybody became, for the instant, panic stricken and on Thursday afternoon of that week when the exchange closed, Bilsland's wild onslaught had sent cotton to five, a phenomenal price. Overnight the press,

body was selling; no one was buying. Point by point the commodity went down; slowly, it is true, because cotton has some innate value, after all.

At one o'clock on Friday cotton stood at four and a half with no demand. "Tomorrow," Bilsland informed the trust in cipher, "we can scoop the cotton of the world." "Tomorrow," he kept repeating to himself. He seemed to be right. At one o'clock—at one-thirty, there was



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

"I got to look after my missus and my kids."

inspired by Bilsland, indicated its confidence that cotton would go to three and a half before Monday, and it was Bilsland's purpose to drive it to that notch by Saturday and then to buy right and left, covering all short sales and scooping the whole market to fill the factories of the National Thread Concern, a concern that had failed, purposely, to buy when prices had been high. There seemed, indeed, none to say this broker, Bilsland, nay. Every-

not a ripple on the surface.

At twenty-five minutes to two all this was changed. Mannering of Broad street in Manhattan, careered tumultuously into the exchange, with determination written on his face.

"Buy cotton!" he exclaimed. He didn't care whether it were December or May. He was there to buy. He bought by hundreds, by thousands, of bales. And there was a ready supply to meet his demand.

Bilsland didn't see it at the start; he was dictating at a telephone.

But the voice of Mannering was heard above the tumult. "Buy!—buy!—buy!"

The crowd laughed. "He's just scaring Bilsland," said the crowd. But it sold to Mannering all that Mannering would take, and Mannering took everything in sight. When the gong clanged, Mannering was still buying; "still buying," ominous words to be considered overnight. There is no limit to the possibilities of a demand—after hours—for a commodity that holds its own during the regular session.

The next morning cotton had jumped to five. Bilsland shook his head. "I must force her down again, somehow," he said. "It won't do to buy at five. I sold at four and a half." He threw himself into the breach and sold. And Mannering bought all that Bilsland had to sell at five, and then at five and a half.

In despair Bilsland telephoned to his principal, the trust.

"We'll stand the loss," it said; "buy in at five and a half."

And while Bilsland had stopped to telephone, to wait, cotton jumped to six, to six and a half, to eight, to ten, to twelve. It kept going up, up, up.

The bulls were going wild.

"The hand of Pliny is in this thing," the crowd told itself.

They were mistaken. It had been merely the hand of Mannering, and another hand behind him. Besides, Mannering had stopped buying at five and a half; the rest was pure excitement. Mannering's terrific demand for cotton at a low price, had sent cotton up, up, up. And it kept going. Why did it keep going, when Mannering no longer bought?

Bilsland knew too well. There was no cotton; at least, not enough to supply a demand for cotton at fifteen cents. Mannering had scooped the surplus, the floating cotton of the world, in, at four, five and five and a half. Things were evened up. The normal balance between supply and demand had been restored. Bilsland had been caught between the upper and the nether millstones; his operation had been worse than a fiasco; it had resulted in a mighty loss. And, beyond that, Man-

nering had the cotton that the National Thread Concern had started out to get.

Who was Mannering? In this instance he had been something more than a mere broker buying for speculators in a speculative market. He had been buying real cotton for a real man for a material purpose. Mannering had been, merely, the representative of Wilkinson, of Monroe.

"I got it all at ninety days," he told Wilkinson. Wilkinson rubbed his hands in silent glee. He had done just what the trust had started out to do; had bought real cotton at its bottom price.

"Ninety days," said Wilkinson to himself, "I can raise millions inside of ninety days. I can do everything inside of ninety days."

Wilkinson did one thing within that ninety days that he had not intended to do. He died. He died in his prime—a typical American manufacturer. And at his death he was in that critical situation which comes to the career of every American manufacturer. He was a self-made man, understanding fully his own mind, and his own business. He had laid his plans. Had he lived he could have consummated all of them. As it was, however, he had staked everything to gain all. He had cotton, he had his mill, he had his hands; he had his own indomitable energy, will, business intelligence. But he had an antagonist—the trust. And there was but one man who could, in this crisis, have opposed the trust, and that man was Wilkinson himself. And it was not to be. But even in his last hours he had his hopes—for Aline.

"Aline," he told her, "all that you must do now is to run the mill. Tell McGonigle to run the mill, to put out the thread, to cut the price, and—keep it up. That's all; just keep it up. And you'll pay the debts, and it will come out all right for you, Aline."

And he left behind him Aline, who did not know how to run a mill, and McGonigle, who did. But McGonigle knew other things. He knew that opportunities are rare things in this world.

And when the trust came nosing about the Wilkinson mill it found McGonigle, the superintendent; a man who believed in the doctrine of the greatest good to the

greatest number, the greatest number, number One.

"Of course," they told McGonigle, "we dont want you to suffer. It's only fair for us to tell you what Wilkinson never did. He was mortgaged up to the handle. He bought cotton on credit; he's got a lot of it, it's true. But he hasn't left a dollar of ready cash. You know that. And the time is coming when there'll be a smash. And then, where are you?"

McGonigle nodded over his friendly glass of ale, paid for by the trust. "I got to look after myself and my missus and my kids, that's true," he conceded.

"We want to do what we can for you, Mr. McGonigle," they told him, through their best secret service agent, who sat with his head over against McGonigle's, and implied that it was up to McGonigle to do his best for them.

"For," the trust had told itself, "if Wilkinson's mill keeps running for ninety days it will pay for that cotton. If it doesn't run for ninety days, we get it, without paying a cent for it. We buy it in, a mere equity under the hammer. That's the whole thing in a nut shell."

And Aline Wilkinson, a young girl with a wonderful eye, and with just the least bit of understanding as to business, struggled with a situation that she could not understand.

In her despair it was to William Westervelt, counselor at law, that she went. Westervelt had never met her, but he well knew who she was. He was sitting in his office in the Baker Building in Monroe, when she knocked timidly upon his door. People don't knock on doors in the Baker Building; they walk in. "Come in!"



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

"We—we must beat them."

yelled Westervelt, a bit out of patience, for he had dropped his first contingent fee at Cradlebaugh's gaming mansion in Monroe. "Come in!"

She came in, in all the radiance of her youth and beauty, tempered though it may have been by the somber garments that she wore.

Westervelt leaped to his feet. "Miss—Wilkinson," he gasped.

"You know me?" she inquired.

"I know who you are—as who does not," stammered Westervelt. "What can I do for you?"

"I don't know," she answered, perhaps as much embarrassed. "I'm in trouble—about the factory and the business. I want some good advice."

Westervelt's manner stiffened. He was young, and, therefore, his professional pride was great.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Wilkinson," he said, "but the firm of Cowen, Covington & Black were your father's lawyers, and those of his estate. Why don't you go to them? I can hardly deal with any of their clients, don't you see?"

She nodded. There was a hopelessness in her demeanor that he could not understand.

"I came to you," she answered, "because I am afraid of Cowen, Covington & Black. You will find out why. I came to you because of Bently—Mr. Bently, of Donaldson. He told me of you."

Westervelt leaned toward her. "Tell me first," he said, "why you cannot go to Cowen. And then," he added, "tell me all about it."

She smiled a discouraged smile. "The first thing I have to tell you," she replied, "is that I have not a dollar of ready money in the world. I want something understood at the start. I don't want to incur an obligation that I can't meet. Mr. Bently told me—isn't there some way we can—arrange about your fee?"

"A contingent fee?" asked Westervelt.

She was relieved. "Do you ever do it?" she inquired.

"I always do it," answered Westervelt; a contingent fee is such a game of chance.

"Tell me all about it," he continued.

She told him the history of her father's

fight with the trust down to the date of his death, in detail, step by step.

"The factory's mortgaged, the house is mortgaged, and my father owed for every pound of cotton in the place and for that which is coming in. If it wasn't for McGonigle, I don't know what I would have done," she concluded.

"Who," queried Westervelt, "is—McGonigle?"

She told him.

"What," he persisted, "has McGonigle done for you since your father's death?"

"Why," she exclaimed, "you must know—it's the talk of the town. Our men, our girls—all the hands—they struck; they went out and left me all alone with McGonigle."

"Why did they strike?" queried Westervelt. "Was it that you could not pay them?" She shook her head. "No," she answered, "for we were making sales enough to run the mills—just run the mills and nothing more, and our sales, so it seemed to me, were on the increase. We could have paid them. But—they went, and McGonigle got other hands—green, they are, too. And we're trying to run the mills with them. We're having a time of it, McGonigle and I."

"And then?" asked Westervelt.

"Then," went on the girl, "the National Thread Concern came to me with an offer of five thousand dollars cash for everything. I went to Cowen, Covington & Black, and they advised me to take it."

Westervelt nodded. "I guess you're right, Miss Wilkinson," he said, "Cowen, Covington & Black are the personal counsel for Blenkinsop, of Massachusetts. I know that much. And Blenkinsop's mill is the head mill in the trust. You're right. And McGonigle?"

"McGonigle," cried the girl, "it was McGonigle who almost persuaded me. He's honest, and he told me that there was nothing else to do, that the business was going to the dogs. And then we had another strike—and then, I came to you."

"And that," asked Westervelt, "is all?"

"All," echoed the girl, with a note of despair in her voice, "except—that I don't want my father's life to go for nothing. I don't want people here in Monroe to rise up and say that he was a failure; he

thought so much of success. The people don't know, now, but that he left hundreds of thousands of dollars. I don't want them to know. I want his memory to be the memory of a man who was an American success. I don't want mortgages foreclosed and judgments taken.

"I don't really care so much for myself. I can get along somehow, but I want father's name kept clear. I want to fight his fight." She paused. Westervelt was glad to note that there was the gleam of gameness in her eye. "I—I want to beat the trust."

Westervelt swung about and glanced out of his window. "You can't run a mill, Miss Wilkinson. Do you want to run it? Do you want to keep on, year after year, being a business woman. Are you sure that you can do it? Are you willing to sell out?"

"I want to sell out," she answered; "it's what my father wanted me to do. But I want to make my own terms. I will not be forced out, unless they beat me." She stretched forth her hand. "I don't want to be beaten, Mr. Westervelt," she added, with another gleam in her eyes. "I'd rather be poverty stricken all my days, if only I could beat them out—for father's sake."

Involuntarily he stretched forth his own hand and took hers—but for an instant. "We—we must beat them," he mused. "You've got a hard row to hoe; they're hard to beat—McGonigle," he half muttered to himself, "the only man who knows the business." He hummed a snatch of a song for an instant. He swung about and gazed into space. Slowly he swung back again.

"Miss Wilkinson," he told her, "I can't handle this thing unless I know the facts. You don't know them. I'm not a detective, and I'm not a manufacturer of thread. But this looks to me like an inside job, and if you don't mind I'd like to spend a day or two learning the business down at the Wilkinson Thread Works."

He went. His going was merely in accordance with his simple custom of finding out the facts. He was accustomed to begin at the beginning. The situation lay not in his office among his books, but in the office of the thread works. It was

there he ventured. Miss Aline Wilkinson, with a quasi-business air which sat well upon her, showed him about the place.

"Look at our green hands," she told him. He looked at them. The men were irresponsible youths, some of them half drunk; the girls were slatterns; they were all of the flotsam and jetsam of society. "We're used to the best skilled spinners," she continued; "these are terrible. Half the thread is tangled, snarled, ruined. Our machinery is badly used; they don't know how to use it. But they are the best McGonigle could get."

"Have you tried to get your former employees back?" asked Westervelt.

"McGonigle has," she answered. "They won't come. I don't know why. He doesn't know why. And yet if anybody could do anything with them, McGonigle could. I don't know what to do."

They had reached the end of one of the long mills. The girl threw open a small door that looked into a cavernous room beyond.

"It's our waste room," she said; "just look at it. There's only the waste of two weeks in there, and yet it's more than half full. Ordinarily, it doesn't get half full in three months." Her femininity, her Scotch piety, and her inherited thrift got the better of her. She laughed uneasily. "It's a sinful, wicked waste," she said, with emphasis, "a sinful, wicked shame."

Westervelt rubbed his nose. "What," he asked "is waste?"

"Don't you know," she answered. "It's all the snarls, and tangled ends and skeins of thread that have to be thrown away. It is the result of carelessness and of faults in the thread. If you have good workmen, you have but little waste. If poor ones, much."

They were interrupted by McGonigle who had approached them from the rear. "A pile of waste, Miss Wilkinson," he said. "It's these green hands, in course. And, by the way, Miss Wilkinson, about waste. One o' Peters & Co's men was here yesterday—after hours, he was. And with bad news. He said Peters couldn't take our waste not any more. 'You know about Peters,' he says to me; 'Peters has been having a three years' contract with the Northwest Pacific, and it runs out in a



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

"McGonigle's our man and we're waiting till he says the word."

month. Peters,' he says to me, this 'man, was low man before, but now he can't bid, because cotton is gone up—'way up, and waste is up, and some other chaps will get it.' That's what he told me, that same man. And he isn't going to compete. He's out of it, and he couldn't take any of our waste after this day week. You see?"

Aline Wilkinson frowned. "Even that little that helped us has to go."

Westervelt touched her on the arm. "This waste," he said, "what does the Northwest Pacific use it for?"

McGonigle laughed. "Why, sure, man," answered McGonigle, "you know that it's the wad of soft stuff they fill the axles with and wipe the windows, and—and—all that. You've seen the stuff. Who hasn't?"

Westervelt started. "Why," he exclaimed, "you don't mean to tell me that this waste is that waste? No!"

"Sure," answered McGonigle, "only the waste men comb it out and soft it up and fix it over a bit—that's all."

"Come this way," said Aline Wilkinson. She led him into building after building, every floor of which was piled high with bales of cotton.

Westervelt gasped. "You've got all the cotton in the world here," he exclaimed.

She smiled and shook her head. "This," she answered, "is only one-third of what we own. The rest has not yet been delivered." She sighed. "None of it's been paid for," she went on; "perhaps none of it ever will be."

An hour later Westervelt and Miss Wilkinson again stood in the office of the mill. Westervelt had been the rounds. He had talked three times to McGonigle, and he had seen all there was to see.

"Give me," said Westervelt to Miss Wilkinson, "the address of your foreman of the old crew that went out." She did so.

"Let me see the bills of lading for your cotton," he continued. She showed him such as they had. He noted that Wilkinson had bought at five. He discovered from a daily paper on the desk that cotton now stood on the exchange at seventeen.

"The problem," he told Miss Wilkinson, "is to pay for that cotton that your father bought—and to keep it. That's all. If you can do that, the rest is easy sailing.

I'm going to leave you for the present. Good day."

He sought out and found the erstwhile foreman of the Wilkinson works.

"I've just come from McGonigle," he told the foreman tentatively, "and if you chaps only hang on good and tight, it's only a question of time when the National people will be in down there, with plenty of work and plenty of pay. It's tedious waiting but—"

The foreman gripped him by the arm and winked his eye. "It's all right, you can tell McGonigle," he answered; "McGonigle's our man, and we're waiting till he says the word. He's the boss and no one else—with us."

Westervelt wasted no further time. He had confirmed what he already knew. That sufficed. He went to New York. Once there he consulted a business directory and spent the day at the offices of three different concerns. He was after facts—facts—facts. Next day, he was back at the Wilkinson works.

He found Miss Aline Wilkinson almost in tears, with McGonigle at her side swearing insincerely at a green hand who had herself and her machine entangled in a hopeless snarl.

Westervelt looked on and laughed aloud. He touched Miss Aline upon the arm.

"At once," he said.

McGonigle did not hear him, for McGonigle was moving down the line, uttering more sham profanity, intended for the ears of his fair employer. Miss Wilkinson followed Westervelt into the office, and he closed the office doors.

"The first thing," he announced decisively, "is to fire McGonigle."

She was startled. "Why," she protested, "without McGonigle I could do absolutely nothing."

Westervelt had a habit which was a little disagreeable, but invariably effective. In one particular he was no respecter of persons. He held out his hand and rose.

"Good bye," he said.

"What—" exclaimed his fair client, "where are you going?"

"You have the management of this matter, Miss Wilkinson, and I have not.

It is your business and not mine. That's all."

"Man spoils not my cases," Westervelt had told himself many, many times, and he now added, "no, nor woman, neither." Inside of three minutes his scared young client had promised implicitly to obey him.

"Discharge McGonigle. He will know too much if he remains."

That was the first command. McGonigle was sent for and was discharged on the spot. No cause was assigned and none was asked. McGonigle, red of face, with real profanity upon his lips, took his discharge without a query. He did not dare to inquire the cause. He knew.

"So much for that," went on Westervelt. He drew up his chair. "Miss Wilkinson," he said, "cotton that cost you five cents has gone to eighteen—a big price, and you might resell it at an enormous profit—"

She started. "I—I never thought of that," she answered.

"Exactly," he responded. "I'm glad that you did not, because the trust has watched your every movement, and if at any time you started in to sell, the price would drop to nothing for causes that never could be explained or understood. The trust and their broker, Bilsland, have slipped once on cotton, but they'll never slip again. Your salvation lies not in sale, but manufacture."

"But," she protested, "they won't let us manufacture; there is not a skilled thread hand to be had for love or money. We cannot manufacture thread."

"You're not going to manufacture thread, Miss Wilkinson," he said.

She looked at him doubtfully. "Not going to manufacture—thread," she ventured.

Vigorously he shook his head. "You're going to manufacture waste," he answered.

"Waste," she echoed, "waste. Going to manufacture waste. But," she protested at length, "we don't know how, and besides, Peters says that he can't buy it any more."

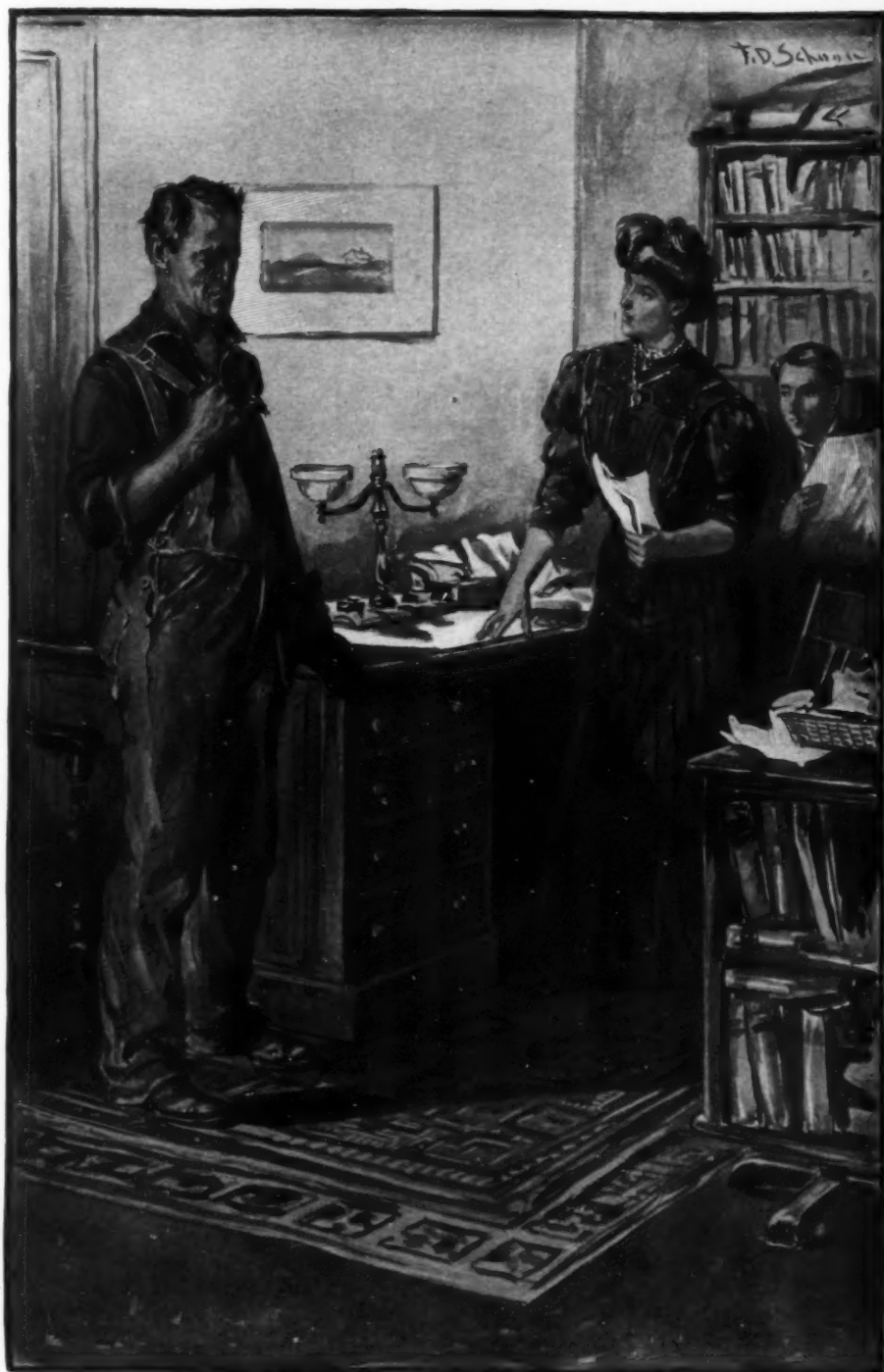
Westervelt smiled. It was all so plain to him. "He doesn't have to buy it," he answered. He spread his hands out upon the desk. "See here, Miss Wilkinson, your problem is just this: You can-

not get one skilled workman inside this place for the next three months. You've got hundreds of greenhorns, whose whole day is a snarl and tangle. You can keep them. The trust and McGonigle intend that you shall keep them. They know what they're about. They are compelling you, perforce, to destroy your reputation for good thread, and to keep your receipts down until it is too late to pay for the cotton that your father bought. And they won't suspect—they'll never suspect, just what you're going to do."

"What—am I going to do?" she queried helplessly.

"You're going to make cotton waste—in bulk," he answered. "Cotton has gone up to eighteen. When cotton goes to eighteen, waste goes to fifteen—this stuff that you've been selling to Peters for a song. There was a time when you threw it away, you had so little. Now, you've got more waste, almost, than you have thread. And what's happened? It happened to Peters. He's afraid now because cotton's high; he can't get waste enough. Miss Wilkinson, the Northwest Pacific alone, uses half a million dollars worth of waste per year, at least. I've seen New York men. This year the man who puts in his proposal to that railroad at fifteen cents is going to lose money on it, because he can't buy crude waste at less than that. But, you're going to bid. You, bought at five, you're going to bid in at twelve. You're going to get the contract; it's settled. What will happen. Outside, McGonigle and the trust will inspect the output of your thread mill; they will forget the waste. Your greenhorn hands will make waste—nothing but waste—crude waste. You'll hire some half dozen of Peter's hands to comb it and put it into shape. You'll get your monthly payments from the railroad. You'll furnish them with a grade of waste of which they never dreamed—waste of the best kind. You'll borrow money on your contracts; you'll pay your cotton bill, and you'll use up one-third of your supply. And all you've got to do is to discharge any of your hands who does good work, turn him over to the trust and hire a tangler and a snarler in his place, and then—"

"And then?" demanded Aline Wilkinson.



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

McGonigle was discharged on the spot.

"I don't know," answered Westervelt. "when the time comes, then we'll see."

That afternoon, by means of data wormed by Westervelt out of three of the best waste men in New York, he and his young client wired a lengthy telegram on to the Northwest Pacific, and followed it with a registered letter. Westervelt had prophesied the result. The contract was Miss Aline Wilkinson's. There was not a cotton waste man in the universe who could touch her by a cent. It was all so simple; all so easy, and—Westervelt had done it.

For the next few months good thread, bad thread, and all kinds except the very, very best—the firsts—went into the waste room to be combed and dressed by a corps of expert waste men; to be shipped on to the railroad, per contract, without default. In the meantime, the demand for Wilkinson's "W. W. W." increased, for the supply was falling off. The women of the eastern states were crying aloud for it. The trust was putting its thread on the market.

"But it's not the W. W. W.," wailed the people.

And in the midst of it all, the secretary of the National Thread Concern stepped into the office of its president.

"Bilsland," he announced, "says that all that Wilkinson raw has been paid for, the whole darned thing, and all delivered."

"No!" exclaimed the president. "It can't be possible!"

But it was, and that was not all. For the Wilkinson strikers, waiting, waiting, waiting, at Monroe until the National should step into the Wilkinson factories, had become impatient in the extreme.

"McGonigle told us to wait," they said. "Where is McGonigle?"

Where was he? Upon his discharge by Miss Aline Wilkinson, he had gone post haste to the National Thread Concern.

"I want the job you promised me," he told them.

They held up their hands in holy horror.

"Why," they exclaimed, "you were the superintendent up there at Wilkinson's, and you tried to sell out that concern—your own employers—tried to sell them out to us."

"Well," he persisted, "didn't you ask me to?"

"Of course," they answered, "but we can't have a man in our employ who'd do a thing like that. If he sells out one boss, he's just as liable to sell out the next one. As it is, you were well paid for the work you didn't do, and you can go."

McGonigle went. He did not go back to Monroe. He knew better. But one day as Miss Aline Wilkinson was sitting in her office, a timid knock was heard, and a man walked shamefacedly into the room. It was not McGonigle, the superintendent. It was her erstwhile, striking foreman.

"Miss Wilkinson," he announced, "we're coming back. Me—and the whole gang, if you'll only have us. We—we want to come."

Aline Wilkinson gasped for joy. "Come back," she exclaimed, gleefully, "come back. I do so want to make some—thread, again. I'm tired, so tired, of all this—waste."

They came back, and Aline Wilkinson pushed her waste makers into two of the unused buildings where cotton had been stored. And the old crew started in, and "W. W. W." once more, in its abundance, delighted the very souls of the eastern housewives.

It was weeks after this that Westervelt had a call over his telephone. It was from Wilkinson's. He went up there. There was Aline Wilkinson. There, also, were the representatives of the trust.

"We've come to make an offer for the plant," they told Westervelt and his client. "We want the mill and the stock and the good will and—the cotton—raw—and—everything. You see?"

Aline Wilkinson smiled. "For five hundred thousand?" she asked.

They looked very grave. "Five hundred thousand," they answered.

Westervelt snickered, "Five million is more like it," he suggested.

Two hours later the conclave was over. The National Thread Concern had bought, for cash, everything that was operated under the name of the Wilkinson Thread Works. And for that all, they paid to Aline Wilkinson—well, a dollar, or two—or more. It matters not how much. It was enough.

"Your—fee?" queried Miss Wilkinson of Westervelt.

Westervelt shook his head. "I state no fee today," he answered. "Some day in the future I may be very hard up for very hard cash. Then you may pay me. But not now."

As a matter of fact, he had intended to charge no fee. The game and the girl had been enough for him in this case; the excitement of the one, and the friendship of the other. "I'll never take a fee from her," he told himself, "unless—" He smiled soberly at the possibility.

"As if I should ever marry," he thought, for William Westervelt was not a woman's man.

The excitement of the thread game kept him many, many weeks from the gaming tables at Cradlebaugh's. Possibly the recollection of the girl had something to do with this. But one day he sauntered into Cradlebaugh's with two dollars in his pocket, and sat down. Fifteen hours later, he left the place, in broad daylight, haggard and pale and tired, with fifty thousand dollars to his credit. He had won, won, won.

As he went down the steps of Cradlebaugh's big house a carriage drove by. Westervelt glanced at it, and stopped as if stunned. A girl in the carriage nodded to him, a girl, whose face, seeing him where he was, suddenly went white.

"Thunder," thought Westervelt, "she ought not to have seen me. What will she think."

The girl was Aline Wilkinson. She thought many things. She knew that Cradlebaugh's was Cradlebaugh's. She noted the haggard expression upon the face of Westervelt, master lawyer, master gambler.

She sighed. "What a wicked waste—of good material," she thought. And then of a sudden, she thought of what he had said. "Some day I may need money. Then I will come to you."

To her the face of Westervelt, as he came down the steps of Cradlebaugh's, was the face of a man who needed money—who had lost his all. She could not know that he had won thousands there in the last few hours.

That afternoon Westervelt received a missive from Miss Wilkinson. She enclosed a check. It was for his fee. He looked at it doubtfully a moment, and then drew forth his pocket book, and placed it with his other possessions.

"There's a run of luck in this," he told himself, "that is irresistible. It must mean something."

He strolled out. Fifteen minutes later he was once more seated in the house of Cradlebaugh. But he had been mistaken. His fifteen hours before had wasted his energies. He was no longer fit to sit in a game. He was tired—dead tired. Inside of three hours he was penniless. But, still, his eye brightened and his step lightened.

"The game—the game," he whispered to himself, "and next time, better luck."

Otsugata-no-gata

BY ISABEL McDOUGALL

It was John Allyn who brought the little brown man down to Malabar's that hot Sunday and introduced him to us. I wish I could say that he wore a satin kimono embroidered with storks and an obi and two swords, but he didn't. He wore an ordinary gray business suit like father, and gold spectacles like my German professor, and black hair cut *en brosse* like my French professor.

Penelope was looking her loveliest in that sweet English embroidery gown. And I haven't been her sister for nearly sixteen years without knowing just how lovely she can look. I suppose a Japanese has seen a million girls of my kind, small and dark, but with Pen's five-foot-seven of lilies and roses, crowned with golden hair, a new goddess "swam into his ken," as somebody says in our "Poetical Selec-

tions" about quite another matter.

"Miss Burton," John said, "may I present Mr. Otsugata."

Pen gave her entrancing smile, and the Japanese sucked in his breath the way they do when they are extra polite, and bowed low without taking his eyes off her.

"And also Miss Helen Burton, Mr. Otsugata."

Mr. Otsugata bowed again. But he never looked at me. Afterwards, when we became good friends I reminded him of this and he apologized. At the time, however, he walked off holding Pen's lingerie parasol over her head and I simply did not exist for him.

John Allyn sat down on the ragged Long Island lawn and laughed and laughed and laughed.

"It's all up with Otsugata-no-Gata! 'I'm sorry for Mr. Bluebeard!' " he began quoting. "And our little brown brother is a mighty good chap, Nell."

I asked him what he said his Christian name was.

"Can a heathen have a Christian name?" pondered John, rolling a cigaret.

"His first name, then."

"As the Japs wear their first names last, I suppose it is Gata. Gata of Otsugata is the way we would put it. I take it that means something like 'Coyne of Kilcoyne,' or 'The O'Donnell Don.'"

"Or Macleod of that ilk," I chimed in. "Then he is a Japanese nobleman."

"Gentleman," corrected John. "Knight—Armigerous—of what they call the Samurai class. And, Nellie, my dear, do you observe that he would like to make a Samurai-ess of our Penelope!"

"'O Penelope San!' " said I, trying the sound of it. "And is he about Pen's age, John? All—look alike to me."

"Tut! tut! where do you learn your language, young lady?" (Well, I learn some of it from Professor Goodman and more of it from my future brother-in-law, Mr. John Allyn!) "Our foreign friend looks thirty-five, but I happen to know that he is not yet twenty-one."

"And ignored me!" I exclaimed, properly indignant. "Why, in Japan I'd be quite grown up and Pen would be an old woman!"

Pretty soon back came Otsugata and

along came Mrs. Randolph, the pretty widow, and her Tommy. Tommy isn't pretty. He has red hair and about a million freckles, and no front teeth to speak of, but he's a duck of a seven-year-old.

"*Ohyo*, Otsugata," said John. "Did Miss Burton *sayonara* you or did you *sayonara* Miss Burton?"

"Miss Burton sailing with Mr. Jones," answered the Japanese. You couldn't tell from his smooth, round face what he liked and what he didn't like. "Call him De Johnes, man, if you are not hunting trouble. Mrs. Randolph, may I present my friend, Mr. Otsugata."

Mrs. Randolph "howdyed" in her pleasant Southern way and bade Tommy shake hands. But Tommy backed away with his fists behind him.

"I do-on't li-like nig-gers," he drawled.

Wasn't that dreadful? If Otsugata's feelings were hurt his countenance did not betray him. It's what John Allyn calls a poker face. He put out his hand and said with perfect good humor, "I'm not nigger, stupid."

"Ain't you? What are you?" Curiosity brought Tommy nearer.

"Japanese."

"Is that a-a—Injun?" Tommy was within reach of the outstretched hand.

"May be it is, kind of Indian. Do you like Indians?" with a beaming, full-moon smile.

"Yep," decidedly.

"Well, you are going to like Japanese, too."

And all of a sudden Tommy seemed to be of the same opinion. He shook hands without any more urging and from that moment he was Otsugata's prime admirer. All the children in the house adored him in three days. I suppose because he was nothing but a big child himself. They tagged at his heels to the postoffice, where he treated them to soda water and country candy.

Once he brought back about five pounds of bull's-eyes, all-day-sucks, peppermints, and gum drops loose in a newspaper to Pen, holding her court on the veranda.

"Take some," he entreated. And then, with great self-denial, for he loved sweets himself like a baby: "Take all. They are for you." He fled, leaving Pen somewhat

embarrassed with the pile on her lap. I only wish they had been better candies. But I am getting too previous, as John Allyn would say.

In this wise did Aisaku Otsugata-no-Gata drop down, an Asian exotic, into our summer circle of ordinary Americans. (That's the kind of English Professor Goodman teaches me.) We found out later that Aisaku was his Christian name and John Allyn called him "Isaac," which I consider distinctly unkind. Inside of a week he was the most popular person in the place. Not only at Malabar's but at the other hotels and boarding houses and out at the fort where he spent a great deal of time playing cards with the officers. Everybody liked him, except possibly De Johnes—oh yes, and his laundress.

I heard her talking to him in the hall one day. She said she did not hold with a gentleman sending part of his wash elsewhere; she expected to have it all. Otsugata assured her that he gave her all his.

"Huh! don't you wear no night-shirts nor no drawers?" demanded Mrs. McNally.

I shut my door then, so as not to embarrass him, but I don't think Otsugata minded. He just didn't see the point.

Remember this was more than a year ago. Since then, I, too, have read a great deal in the papers about the "inscrutable" Japanese eye, and the "cryptic" Japanese smile. I want to say that Otsugata's eyes were as frank as their kind of cut would allow, and his smile was no more cryptic than Tommy Randolph's. Indeed it was the same sort of trusting, ingenuous, irresistible seven-year-old smile. Tommy's grin was perhaps a little more open on account of his front teeth being gone.

I repeat; this wasn't one of those extraordinary Japanese. He was only extraordinarily sweet-tempered and simple and genial. He was a little goose about some things; Pen for instance, and Shakespeare, and giving up one's self for one's country. He professed a great admiration for athletic sports, too, but the only one he

was good at, as far as I know, was swimming. Oh, and card playing, which is a sport, I suppose, if not an athletic one.

I remember one heavenly day, bright, blue, and breezy, that Pen and I were out on the raft. It was rather rough and we were the only girls who had swum so far. Pen looks like a girl, if she is twenty-eight. All her usual men were hanging round: De Johnes, on whom she was throwing water while he begged the favor of her company on his automobile that afternoon; and John, of course, lazily floating on his back, smoking his eternal cigaret, just as he has



DRAWN BY Y. SAYONARA

Holding Pen's lingerie parasol.

lazily floated in Pen's wake ever since we motherless girls first knew "the big boy next door." Otsugata was swimming round and round like a water-dog: "I am Ainu!" he cried. "Ainus live in sea!" Even the deformed man was there, with his poor back showing plainly in his bathing suit.

And no wonder, for Penelope—why that girl can dive and come up looking lovely enough to have her photograph taken. Penelope's hair curls when every one else's is plastered in wet strings to their heads. Penelope's eyes dance and glitter like the waves in the sun, and her teeth are white as foam. And her voice is just music, whatever she says.

"Goodness! there's my toe through my stocking, again!" Now, don't I know that it's almost immodest to call attention to that pinky, pearly thing poking through her black bathing hose. But whatever Pen does is right. "If I could only swim like Mr. Otsugata they'd never touch bottom, and then they'd never wear out."

"Automobiling won't wear them out either," suggested De Johnes.

But Pen turned a deaf ear on him and remarked apropos of nothing: "Water, water everywhere nor any drop to drink!"

"Do you want a drink, Miss Burton?" asked De Johnes. "Swim in with me to the dock and I'll have them send down some claret cup."

"I don't want to swim in and I don't want claret cup. I want a glass of ice-water and I want it right here."

"I get it," said Otsugata eagerly. Plunging face downward he reached the shore with a few swift overhead strokes, ran up to the house and once more swam out to the raft with a glass of water held high in one hand above the waves. They were rougher now but he did not spill a drop.

"How lovely! Thank you, so much, Mr. Otsugata," spoke the voice of voices.

And the men said "Good work, Otsugata!" "How far can you swim, Otsugata?"

"Don't know how far can swim. Have swummed seven mires—miles," answered the Japanese.

"Swenson, the life saver at the Beach House, is going to challenge you to a match. They have subscribed for a prize

of a silver cup." That was De Johnes.

Otsugata drew in his breath with Japanese politeness. "Will you accept siver cup, Miss Penerope?"

"He's a dead game sport!" laughed John Allyn.

"First catch your cup, Otsugata," croaked the hunchback.

"Yase," drawled the brown-skinned youth through his nose.

Otsugata had been educated in London, and I suppose that is why an English accent sort of lay on top of his native one, and made his talk even funnier. He sometimes mixed his "l-s" and his "r-s;" he made hard work of his "th-s," and, though he was fond of quotations and proverbs he always got them just a little wrong.

"Birds with same frock together," he would say when he found our crowd gathered in one corner of the veranda. That wasn't so bad when you consider that we all had fluffy white gowns on. But he'd have said it, anyhow.

He would perch on the rail in front of the birds with same frock, crook his short legs around the balusters for safe keeping, and entertain us many a summer evening. I remember once, while the moon made a halo behind his stiff, black hair that stood straight up, that he dramatically recited Shakespeare. The recital was ornamented by his queer combination of accents and gestures made with his deft, plump hands. He told us Japanese ghost stories, too, and that splendid story about the Forty-seven Ronins and their revenge on their lord's feudal foe. There was a set of heroes for you! I suppose most people know about them but they were new to me.

Once he borrowed Pen's long-handled silver shoe horn and gave a violent pantomime of a *Daimyo* committing *harakari*, with much mental and physical agony and heart-rending farewells to his family. Pen had to be the lady *Daimyo*. Sometimes he performed wonderful tricks with cards for us. It seemed as if every card in the pack did whatever he wanted. But he kept those mostly for the men in the smoking room. Otsugata had no more self-consciousness than a child, and threw himself heart and soul into whatever he did. That is why he did it so well. John

Allyn said he was the most "affording" person he knew. There's a word to remember.

The day of the swimming match was delicious. Warm enough to wear your prettiest, thinnest gown and not warm enough to take the curl out of your hair. The start and finish were to be at the Beach House, so everybody went over there except Mrs. Randolph who was sick, and

Tommy is a very wise child about boats.

Pretty soon we saw heads coming along; a big, blond, bearded one in the lead and a round, black one a good way behind. Further in their wake was a boat with De Johnes and a man from the Beach House in it.

De Johnes called out, "Keep your distance!" And Tommy called out, "Oh! swim, Otsugata, swim! he's beating you!"

And Otsugata called out "It's all right!"



DRAWN BY Y. SAYONARA

"I bought them in town for you, Miss Penderope."

poor dear Tommy who was crying himself sick because he couldn't go without her. You never saw such a change from storm to sunshine as when I whispered that I'd stay, too, and we'd take a boat and follow the swimmers. There were positive rainbows among his freckles.

Well, he shoved the boat off and jumped in after me like a little man, splashing my new organdie only a little.

whether to us or to De Johnes I don't know. Anyhow, De Johnes shouted "Save your breath for your work! And you, Miss Nellie, don't come so near."

So Tommy and I rowed far beyond the middle of the channel, to be out of their way. By and by they turned and shot past us on the home stretch. Otsugata was well ahead now, with his face down in the water and his plump, brown arms

moving strong and easy in those long overhead strokes of his. Swenson, behind him, was panting as if his big chest would burst.

"Hurrah!" crowed Tommy. "Go it, Otsugata; go it!" fairly jumping for joy.

"Tommy, sit still, or you'll have us over!" I said sharply.

Otsugata smiled his broad glistening smile and waved an arm to us. De Johnes need not have grudged the stroke he lost for he had the race in his own hands.

"Hurrah!" jubileed Tommy, "Hur— Splash!

I never swallowed so much water in my life. And swimming unexpectedly, with your shoes on and your wet skirts clinging to you is very different from swimming in a bathing suit.

Where, oh where was Tommy! I must have hung on to the bottom of the boat a full minute before his poor little white face came up open-mouthed and gasping. Then it sank again, and I let go of the boat to try and reach him. And then—something rushed through the water like a steam engine, something plunged way under after him, and Otsugata came to the surface and was swimming ashore with him.

Well, Swenson swam over the course and got his cup. Tommy and I were in disgrace. All Malabar was disappointed. De Johnes said Otsugata needn't have thrown away the race, the boat was near enough to have got that kid, all right.

I think De Johnes had bet on him. Otsugata himself said sorrowfully, "I could not get your cup, Miss Penerope. Poor Tommy so frightened."

He got her everything else he could think of. And I never had to wring out her bathing suit any more. But I think it made her conspicuous and I wanted John Allyn to stop it. He can't begin too soon to make Pen mind if he ever expects to. But he laughed and said:

"Nature has made Pen conspicuous, Little Nell. Blame Nature."

"You can't blame Nature for trotting up the long veranda at six o'clock, when the whole house is assembled there in its best clothes," said I, hotly.

"Nature didn't publicly brandish a pair of embroidered bathing stockings and cry, 'I bought them in town for you, Miss Penerope!'"

"No, it took a veritable child of Nature to do that. He must have had a juicy time shopping for them! What did Pen say?"

"Oh, you know Pen. She just smiled and said, 'How lovely! Thank you so much, Mr. Otsugata.'"

John laughed. "The poor lad means well. He doesn't know the customs of the country, that's all."

Otsugata himself trotted past us just then where we sat, under the trees, and John challenged him to a game of tennis.

"Thank you," he called back, waving a bland hand, "but I have fish to fly."

He meant that he had something else to do—other fish to fry. I suspect he was taking his poker face to the fort, where it was highly appreciated. John said they appreciated other things in him, too: he was well informed on artillery and keen about problems of coast defence. Wattle is an old fort, but it has one or two good wrinkles. And he certainly was a wonder-child at cards.

"We are looking for amusement," cried Pen coming up noiselessly over the grass with De Johnes tagging her.

"You'll not find it here," said John. "It is just now seriously engaged at Captain Delaney's card table."

"Captain Delaney had better watch the cards then," said De Johnes. "I never saw the beat of that heathen Japanese at stacking them."

"Did you ever know him to stack them except on request?" demanded John.

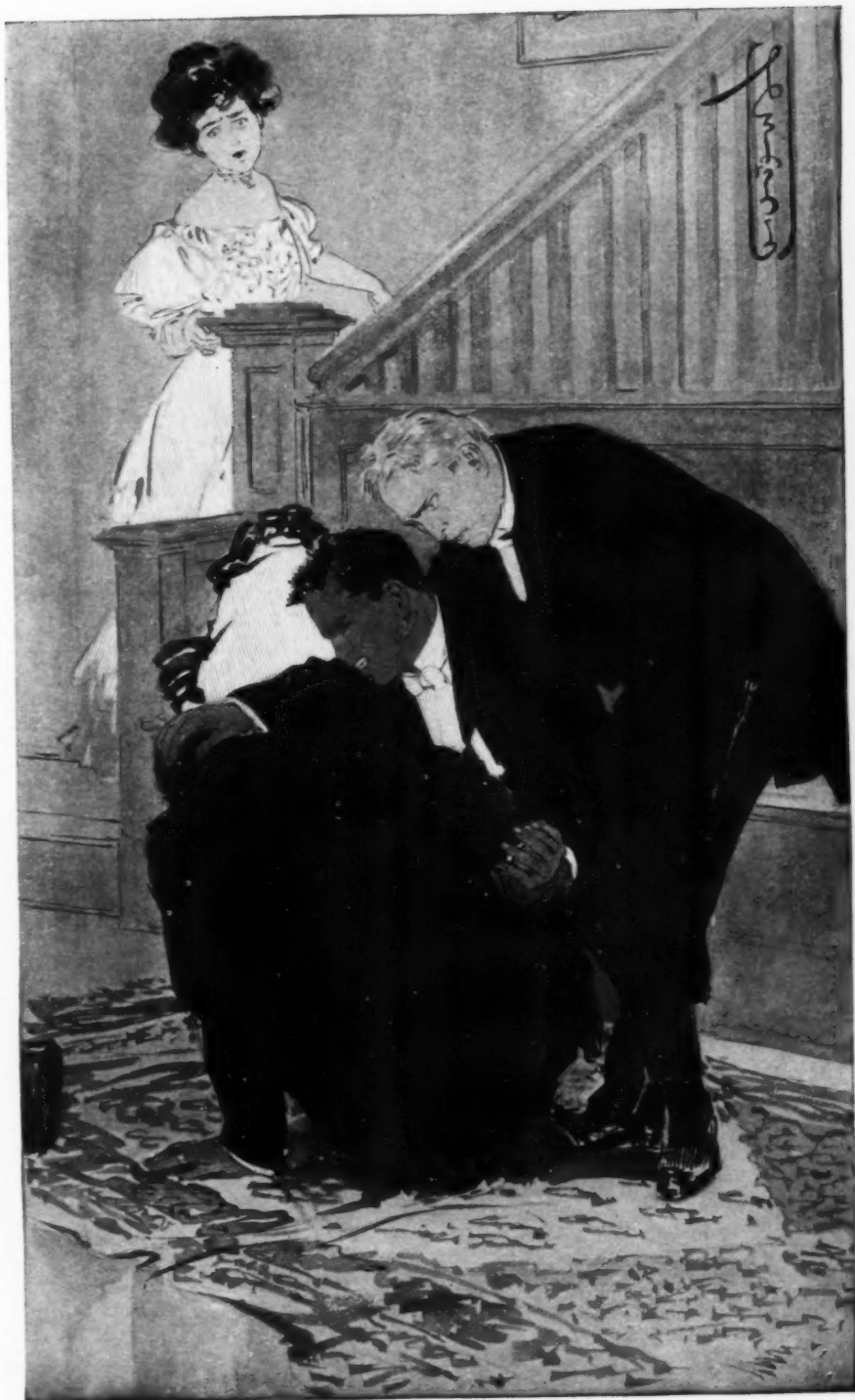
"Of course, I never knew him to," replied De Johnes, with an ugly emphasis.

"I will remind you that I introduced Otsugata here," John spoke very distinctly. "Moreover, let me assure you that I have played with him a great deal and that he beats me by superior skill."

"I admit his superior skill, his highly superior skill," sneered De Johnes. "Come, Miss Burton, shall we not go on with our walk?"

And Penelope, for peace sake, I suppose, moved away with him.

"The cad!" growled John. "When Otsugata says 'Thees ees on the squar-r-e'" John rolled his "r-s" and sounded his "th-s" with an effort, "any one of us would trust him except that obnoxious ass. Well! I am glad he blew off his spite now. There



DRAWN BY V. BAYONARA

With a twist he had De Johnes's arm bent over his back.

are some things our amiable little Samurai might not stand."

The worst of it was that he had not blown off all his spite. That night, after most every one had gone upstairs from the dancing, Pen missed her fan and sent me down for it. That's how I happened to be at the foot of the stairs when the smoking room door flew open and I heard "No! no! for shame, De Johnes!" and De Johnes and Otsugata struggled out into the hall and fell in a heap, Otsugata undermost. Then all of a sudden, with a twist and a heave, he was up and, had De Johnes's arm bent over his back and John Allyn was trying to pull them apart.

"Stop, Otsugata!" Otsugata had a horrid frown and his teeth were grinning and the white of his eyes showed like them. "De Johnes, take it back before he breaks your arm."

"Take it back, De Johnes, you were dead wrong!" they all shouted at once.

"Otsugata, in America we don't fight before ladies," John urged. And I was glad I was there when Otsugata, still glaring like a tiger cat, let go. "Speak up, De Johnes!" The men were in a ring around him and very slowly De Johnes spoke up.

"You chaps are all against me . . . And there is a lady present . . . perhaps I was too hasty." He held out his hand.

But now you could see that the Japanese have never been taught about forgiving their enemies. Otsugata turned his back.

"I scorn and contemp' you, Jones!" He answered savagely, and no body laughed at his funny word. "I apologize to fighting before you, Meess Helen."

Then John hustled me off to bed and told me not to say a word about it to any one. And I didn't. I should have thought the whole house would have heard the racket, but may be it wasn't as loud as it sounded to me. And isn't it funny the way a lot of men will keep a thing like that from the women of their families—at least until long afterwards?

Penelope never knew why De Johnes went away the next day, so she couldn't have laid that to Otsugata's charge. But I think she had tired of her Oriental plaything. We overheard his dismissal while John was teaching me a new solitaire in the

small drawing-room. We were so intent upon it that we never noticed what was said in the large drawing-room at first, and our only way out would have been right past them.

"Japanese ees ohgly as mohnkeys," he was saying dejectedly to Penelope.

"Oh, you mustn't say that, Mr. Otsugata," she answered him without much conviction.

And then I suppose she saw he needed comfort. Penelope has a good heart. If she hadn't I don't believe her beauty would do so much damage.

"I don't think so. None of us thinks so."

"Eet ees because I am brown man," he went on sorrowfully.

"No, indeed. Don't imagine such a thing for a moment," she lied kindly.

"You are no browner than John Allyn gets on a cruise. Why, you are our good friend, our valued friend, Mr. Otsugata. Now, I'll tell you a secret, rather than have you think that. I've refused two Americans this summer. Do you want to know their names?"

"No, no, they would not laike it, Miss Penerope," hastily. Otsugata might be a little goose, but he was also a little gentleman. "Perhaps sometime," he added deprecatingly, "some ozzier—other time—I will wait—patient. You say you like me now, already, Miss Penerope—"

"Oh no, you mustn't, mustn't wait. It would do no good. I—I feel highly honored by your—admiration, Mr. Otsugata. It is not because you are a Japanese. I—would say 'No' to any American man—any—but—"

She said no more and for a moment Otsugata said no more. Then his voice sounded loud and steady: "I hope it is Mr. John Allyn."

"Ahem — hem — hem — hem!" You never heard any one clear his throat so thunderously as John Allyn. And then Penelope drew the portiere back. She was much more distressed than her rejected suitor.

He went back to Japan, poor fellow. John said I needn't feel too badly. He was too young to be fatally wounded and he would meet lots of pretty Japanese girls

and be consoled. I don't know whether he did or not, because we only heard of him once again—through the newspapers. Do you remember in the first attack on Port Arthur how a Japanese lieutenant and three privates fought their way to the foot of a fortification and were surrounded by Russians and would not surrender? They

fought hand to hand and sold their lives dear. To kill the three privates and wound the officer cost the Russians nine men. And then they offered him quarter once more and he would not take it. And finally he fell.

Well, the name of that heroic fool was Otsugata-no-Gata.

The Jilting of Mr. Driscoll

BY HERBERT QUICK

This here doctrine of Mr. Witherspoon's about lettin' cattle range wide, has some arguments of a humane nature back of it. But his openin' of it up in the instructions f'r runnin' the ten thousand dogies, was the same kind of a miscue the Pawnees made when they laid fer an' roped the U. P. flyer—which Mr. Elkins described as a misapplication of sound theory to new an' unwonted conditions; as the rattler said when he swallowed the lawn hose. Principles has their local habitats the same as live things; an' nothin' is worse f'r 'em than to turn 'em loose where they don't know the water-holes an' wind-breaks. Principles that'll lay on fat an' top the market in Boston, 'll queer the hull game in a country where playin' it is tangled up with Injuns, gold mines, 'r range-stuff. In the short-grass country, dogy principles are sure a source of loss, until they get hardened up so's to git out and rustle with the push. Now, this Humane-Society-Injun-Relief-Corps form of doin' good—harmless, you'd say, as we set here by the grub-wagon; but I swear to Godfrey's Gulch, the worst throw-down I ever got in a social way growed out of a combination of them two highly proper idees with a Oberlin College gal I met up to Chamberlain.

This was the way of it: The "O. M." Mr. Elkins, I mean, of the J-Up-An'-Down Ranch, was called to Sioux Falls as a witness in a case of selling conversation-water to the Injuns, an' casually landed a juicy contract with Uncle Sam f'r supplyin' beef-issue cattle over on the Rosebud. The Pierre firm of politicians he outbid, havin' things framed up pretty good, as

they thought, on the delivery, at once hops to him with a proposition to pay him I d'know how much money an' take it off his hands. Havin' a pongshong f'r doin' business on velvet, the O. M. snaps 'em up instantaneous, an' comes home to Wolf Nose Crick smilin' like he'd swallowed the canary, an' sends me to Chamberlain to see that the contract is carried out as fer as proper.

"Go up, Aconite," he says, "an' remember that while the J-Up-An'-Down outfit don't feel bound to demand any reforms, its interests must be protected. Any sort of cattle the Pierre crowd can make look like prime steers to the inspector, goes with us. But," he goes on, "our names and not theirs are on the contract. These inspectors," says he, "bein' picked out on their merits at Washington, to look after the interests of the gover'ment an' the noble red, it would be unpatriotic if not *Lee's Majesty* to cavil at their judgment on steers, especially if it coincides with that of Senator Whaley's men at Pierre. Therefore, far be it from us to knock. But be leery that we don't get stuck for non-performance: which we can't afford. See?"

It was purty plain to a man who'd matricelated as night-wrangler, an' graduated as IT on the J-Up-An'-Down, an' I went heart-free an' conscience clear, seein' my duty perfectly plain.

Now at Chamberlain was this Oberlin College lady, who had some kind of an inflamed conscience on the Injun question, an' was dead stuck on dumb animals an' their rights. She was one of the kind you don't see out here—blue eyes, you know,

yellow hair, the kind of complexion that don't outlive many hot winds; an' she had lots of pitchers around her, of young folks in her classes, an' people with mortar-board hats an' black nighties, 'r striped sweaters. She was irrupting into the Injun question *via* Chamberlain. Her thought was that the Injuns was really livin' correct's fur as they had a chance, an' that we orto copy their ways, instid of makin' them tag along after our'n.

"Maybe that's so," says I, "but I've took the Keeley cure twice now, an' please excuse me!"

She looked kinder dazed f'r a minute, an' then luffed, an' said somethin' about the sardonic humor of the frontier.

I had been asked to give a exhibition of broncho bustin' at the ranch where she was stayin' an' she was agitating herself about the bronks' feelin's. I told her that it was just friendly rivalry between the puncher an' the bronk, an' how, out on the ranch, the gentle critters 'd come up an' hang around by the hour, a-nickerin' f'r some o' the gang to go out an' bust 'em.

"It reminds me," she says, "of my brother's pointers begging to go hunting."

"Same principle," says I.

It seemed to ease her mind, an' feelin' as I did towards her, I wouldn't have her worry f'r anything. Then she found out that I was a graduate of the high school of Higsville, Kansas, an' used to know what quadratics was, an' that my way of emitting the English language was just an acquired mannerism, like the hock-action of a string-halted hoss, an' she warmed up to me right smart, both then an' after, never askin' to see my diploma, an' begun interrogatin' me about the beef-issue, an' discussin' the Injun question like a life-long friend. Whereat, I jumped the game.

But, for all that, about this time I become subject to attacks of blue eyes an' yellow hair, accompanied by vertigo, blind-staggers, bots, ringin' in the ears—like low, confabulatin' talk, kinder interspersed with little bubbles of lafture—an' a sense o' guilt whenever I done anything under the canopy of heaven that I was used to doin'. Can yeh explain that, now? Why this Oberlin proposition should make me feel like a criminal jest because the pony grunted at the cinchin' o' the saddle,

'r because I lammed him f'r bitin' a piece out o' my thigh at the same time, goes too deep into mind science f'r Aconite Driscoll. O' course, a man under them circumstances is supposed to let up on cussin' an' not to listen to all kinds o' stories; but you understand, here I was, conscience-struck in a general an' hazy sort of way, mournin' over a dark an' bloody past, an' thinkin' joyfully of death. It was the condemnedest case I ever contracted, an' nothin' saved me to be a comfort to my friends but the distraction of the queer actions of that inspector.

I never had give him a thought. Senator Whaley and his grafters was supposed to arrange matters with him—an' I'm no corruptionist, anyway. Of course, the cattle wasn't quite up to export shippin' quality. The senator's gang had got together a collection of skips an' culls an' canners that was sure a fraud on the Injuns, who mostly uses the cattle issued to 'em the way some high-up civilized folks does hand-raised foxes—as a means of revortin' to predatory savagery, as Miss Ainsley says. Ainsley was her name—Gladys Ainsley—an' she lived som'eres around Toledo. The p'int is, that they chase 'em, with wild whoops an' yips over the undulatin' reservation until they can shoot 'em, an' I s'pose, sort of imagine, if Injuns have imaginations, that time has turned back'ard in her flight, an' the buffalo season is on ag'in. Whereas, these scandalous runts of steers and old cow stuff was mostly too weak or too old to put up any sort of a bluff at speed. But, under my instructions, if they looked good to the inspector, they looked good to me; an' bein' sort of absent-minded with gal-stroke, I rested easy, as the feller said when the cyclone left him on top o' the church tower.

The inspector was a new man, an' his queer actions consisted mostly of his showin' up ten days too soon, an' then drivin' 'r ridin' around the country lookin' at the stock before delivery. This looked suspicious; fer we s'posed it was all off but runnin' 'em through the gap once 'r twice to be counted. Whaley's man comes to me one day, an' ast me what I thought of it.

"I'm paid a princely salary," says I, "fer keepin' my thoughts to myself. This



DRAWN BY E. BERT SMITH

"There ain't them many cavvs to be got in all Dakoty."

here's no case," I continued, "callin' f'r cerebation on my part. If thinkin's the game, it's your move. What's Senator Whaley in politics fer," says I, "if a obscure forty-a-month-an'-found puncher is to be called on to think on the doin's of a U. S. inspector? What's he in this fer at all, if we've got to think at this end of the lariat?"

"He was talkin' about cavvs," said the feller, whose name was Reddy—a most ungrammatical cuss. "He was a-pokin' round with the contrack, a-speakin' about cavvs. Wun't you go an' talk to him?"

"Not me!" says I, f'r the hull business disgusted me, an' my guilt come back over me shameful, with the eyes an' hair an' things plenteous. Whaley's man rode off shakin' his head.

Next day the inspector hunted me up.

"Mr. Driscoll?" says he, f'r I'd been keepin' out of his way.

"Correct," says I.

"You represent the Elkins interests in the matter of supplying stock for the issue, do you not?" says he.

"In a kind of a sort of a way," says I, f'r I didn't care to admit too much till I see what he was up to. "In a kind of a sort of a way, mebbe I do. Why?"

"Did you have anything to do," says he, unfoldin' a stiff piece of paper, "with procurin' the cattle now in readiness for delivery?"

"Hell, no!" I yells, an' then seein' my mistake, I jumped an' added: "You see, the top stuff f'r the Injun market is perduced up around Pierre. So we sub-contracted with this Pierre outfit to supply it. It's their funeral, not ours. It's good stock, ain't it?"

"I am assured by Senator Whaley's private secretary," says he, "who is a classmate of mine, that there would be great dissatisfaction among the Indians, owing to certain tribal traditions and racial peculiarities—"

"You bet!" says I, f'r he seemed to be gettin' wound up an' cast in it, "that's the exact situation!"

"Would be dissatisfaction," he went on, "if cattle of the type which in the great markets is considered best, were furnished here. And I have great confidence in his judgment."

"So've I," I says. "He's one of the

judgmentousest fellers you ever see."

"So let that phase of the question pass," says he, "for the present. But there's a clause in this contract—"

"Don't let that worry you," says I. "There's claws in all of 'em if you look close."

He never cracked a smile, but unfolded it, and went on.

"Here's a clause," says he, "calling for a hundred and fifty cows with calves at foot, for the dairy herd, I presume."

"Cavvs at what?" says I.

"At foot," says he, p'intin' at a spot along towards the bottom. "Right there!"

"It's impossible!" says I. "They don't wear 'em that way."

He studied over it quite a while, at that, an' I begun to think I'd won out, but at last he says: "That's the way it reads, an' while I shall not insist upon any particular relation of juxtaposition in offspring and dam—"

"Whope!" says I, "back up an' come ag'in, pardner."

"It seems to be my duty to insist upon the one hundred and fifty cows and calves. Now the point is, I don't find any such description of creatures among the—the bunches in seeming readiness for delivery."

"O!" says I, "that's what's eatin' yeh, is it? W'l don't worry any more. The cow kindergarten's funder up the river. We didn't want to put the tender little devils where they'd be tramped on by them monstrous big oxen you noticed around the corrals. This caff business is all right, trust us!"

Whaley's man was waitin' fer me down at the saloon, an' when I told him about the cavvs, he shrunk into himself like a collapsed football, an' wilted.

"Hain't yeh got 'em?" says I.

"Huh!" says he, comin' out of it. "Don't be a dum fool, Aconite. This is the first I understood of it, an' whoever heard of an inspector readin' a contrack? And there ain't them many cavvs to be got by that time in all Dakoty. Le's hit the wires f'r instructions!"

The telegrams runs something like this:

To Senator Patrick Whaley, Washington, D. C.—Contract calls for a hundred and fifty cows with calves at foot. What shall I do?
(Reddy.)

To Reddy Withers, Chamberlain, S. D.

Wire received. Calves at what? Explain, collect.

Whaley.

Hundred and fifty cows and calves. What do you advise?

Reddy.

See inspector.

Whaley.

Won't do. Inspector wrong.

Reddy.

Fix inspector or get calves.

Whaley.

I'd got about the same kind of a telegram to Mr. Elkins, addin' that the Whaley crowd was up in the air. I sent it by Western Union to Sturgis, and then up Wolf Nose Crick by the Belle Fourche & Elsewhere Telephone Line. The O. M., as usual, cuts the melon with a word. His wire was as follows:

Take first train Chicago. Call for letter Smith & Jones Commission merchants Union Stock Yards.

Elkins.

This was sure an affliction on me, f'r I had fixed up a deal to go with Miss Ainsley an' her friends on a campin' trip, lastin' up to the day of the issue. She'd been readin' one of Hamlin Garland's books about a puncher who'd scooted through the British aristocracy, hittin' only the high places in a social way, on the strength of a gold prospect an' the diamond hitch to a mule-pack. She wanted to see the diamond hitch of all things. There orto be a law ag'inst novel-writin'. I got Reddy to learn me the diamond hitch so I could make good with Gladys, an' here was this mysterious caff expedition to the last place in the world, Chicago, a-yankin' me off by the night train.



DRAWN BY E. BERT SMITH

I took a basket of eggs.

I went over to tell her about it. First, I thought I'd put on the clo'es I expected to wear to Chicago, a dandy fifteen dollar suit I got in town. An' then I saw how foolish this would be, an' brushed up my range clo'es, tied a new silk scarf in my soft-roll collar, an' went. Here's my diagram of the hook-up: Any o' them mortar-board-hat, black-nightie fellers she had pitchers of, could probably afford fifteen dollar clay-worsteds; but it was a good gamblin' proposition that none of 'em could come in at the gate like a personally-conducted cyclone, bring up a-stannin' from a dead run to a dead stop 's if they'd struck a stone wall, go clear from the bronk as he fetched up an' light like a centaur before her, with their sombrero in their hand. Don't light, you say? Wal, I mean as a centaur would light if he took a notion. You'd better take a hike down to see how the wrangler is a gittin' along with them steeds—'r else subside about this Greek myth biz. It helps on with this story—not!

The p'int is, that gals and fellers both like variety. To me, the "y" in her name, the floss in her hair, the kind of quivery lowness in her voice, the rustle of her dresses as she walked, the way she looked like the pitchers in the magazines an' talked like the stories in 'em, all corroborated to throw the hooks into me. An' I s'pose the nater's-nobleman gag went likewise with her. Subsecent happenin's—but I must hold that back.

We sot in the hammock that night—the only time Aconite Driscoll ever was right up against the real thing in ladies' goods—an' she read me a piece about a Count Gibson a-shooting his lady-love's slanderers so full o' holes at a tournament that they wouldn't hold hazel-brush. They was one verse she hesitated over, an' skipped.

I ast her if she thought she—as a supposed case—could live out in this dried-up-an'-blowed-away country; an' she said the matter had really never been placed before her in any such a way as to call for a decision on her part. Purty smooth, that! Then she read another piece that wound up with "Love is best!" from the same book, an' forgot to take her hand away when I sneaked up on it, an'—Gosh! talk about happiness: we never git anything o' quite

that kind out here! I never knewed how I got to the train, 'r anything else until we was a-crossin' the Mississippi at North McGregor. Here the caff question ag'in unveiled its heejus front, to be mulled over till I reached the cowman's harbor in Chicago, the Exchange Building at the Yards, an' found Jim Elkins' instructions awaitin' me.

"Dear Aconite," he says, "the Chicago stock yards are the nation's doorstep for bovine foundlings. New-born calves are a drug on the market there, owing to abuses in the shipping business which we won't just now take time to discuss, to say nothing about curing 'em. What is done with 'em is a mystery which may be solved some day; but that they perish in some miserable way is certain. Two carloads of them must perish on the Rosebud instead of in Packingtown—in the Sioux soup kettles, instead of the rendering tanks. If you can keep them alive to reach Chamberlain—and I have great confidence in your ability to perform this task imposed upon you by the carelessness of Senator Whaley's men either at Washington or at the range. I have heard that one or two raw eggs per day per calf will preserve them, and it looks reasonable. Smith & Jones will have them ready loaded for you for the next fast freight west. I hope you'll enjoy your trip!"

Well, you may have listened to the plaintive beller of a single caff at weanin' time, 'r perhaps to the symfery that emanates from the pen of three 'r four. Funder'n this the experience of most don't go. Hence, I don't hope to give yeh any idee of the sound that eckered over northern Illinois from them two cars o' motherless waifs. The cry of the orphan smote the air in a kind of endless chain o' noise that at two blocks off sounded like a chorus of steam calliopes practicin' holts at about middle C. Nothin' like it had ever been heard or done in Chicago, an' stockmen, an' reporters, an' sight-seers swarmed around wantin' to know what I was a-goin' to do with the foundlin's—an' I wan't in any position to be interviewed, with the Chicago papers due in Chamberlain before I was. I'd 'ave had a dozen scraps if it hadn't been f'r the fear of bein' arrested. But with the beef issue comin' on a-pacin';



E. Bert Smith

DRAWN BY E. BERT SMITH

Inducin' a calf to eat a raw egg.

I had to pass up luxuries involvin' delay. I sot in the caboose, an object of the prurient curosimy of the train-crew until we got to Elgin 'r som'eres out there, where I contracted eight cases of eggs an' one of nervous prostration.

Here it was I begun ministering to the wants of my travellin' orphan asylum. They was from four hours to as many days old when the accident of birth put 'em under my fosterin' care. I knowed that it was all poppy-cock givin' dairy 'r breedin' herds to them Injuns, an' that these would do as well f'r their uses, 'sif they had real mothers instid o' one as false as I felt. But to look upon 'em as they appeared in the cars, would 'ave give that consciencious but onsophisticated inspector the jimjams. Part of 'em was layin' down, an' the rest trampin' over 'em, an' every one swellin' the chorus o' blats that told o' hunger an' unhappiness. I took a basket of eggs an' went in among 'em, feelin' like a animal trainer in a circus parade as the Reubens gethered around the train, an' business houses closed f'r the show. I waited till the train pulled out, an' begun my career as nurse-maid-in-general.

Ever try to feed a young caff? Ever notice how they faint with hunger before you begin, an' all at once develop the strength of a hoss when you stand over 'em an' try to hold their fool noses in the pail? Ever see a caff that couldn't stand alone, run gaily off with a two-hundred-an'-fifty-pound farmer, poison' a drippin' pail on his nose, an' his countenance a geyser of milk? Well, then you can form some faint idee of the practical difficulty of inducin' a caff, all innercent o' the world an' its ways o' takin' sustenance, to suck a raw egg. But nothin' but actual experience can impart any remote approach to a notion o' what it means to incorporate the fruit o' the nest with the bossy while bumpin' over the track of a northern Iowa railroad in a freight car, movin' at twenty-five miles an hour. I used up two cases of eggs before I was sure of havin' alleviated one pang of hunger, such was the scorn my kindly offers was rejected with. The result was astoundin'. Them cars swept through the country, their decks slippery with yaller gore, an' their lee scuppers runnin' bank-

full, as the sailors say, with Tom-an'-Jerry an' egg shampoo. An' all the time went on that symfery of blats, risin' an' fallin' on the prairie breeze as we rolled from town to town, a thing to be gazed at an' listened to, an' never forgot; to be side-tracked outside city limits f'r fear of the Board of Health and the S. C. P. A., an' me ostrichized by the very brakeys in the caboose as bein' unfit f'r publication, an' forced to buy a mackintosh to wrap myself in before they'd let me lay down on their old seats to sleep. An' when my visions reverted back to the Oberlin people, I couldn't dream o' that yaller hair even, without its seemin' to float out, an' out, an' out into a sea of soft-boiled, in which her an' me was strugglin', to the howlin' of a tearin' tempest of blats.

At last we arrived at Chamberlain. An' here's where the head-end collision of principles comes in, that I mentioned a while ago. Here's where Aconite Driscoll, who for days had been givin' a mother's care to two hundred cavvs was condemned f'r cruelty; an' when he'd been strainin' every nerve an' disturbin' the egg market to keep from bustin' a set of concealed claws in a goverment contract, he was banished as an eggcessory to the crime of bilkin' poor Lo. This tragedy happens out west o' the river at the Issue House.

Reddy had a string of wagons with hog-racks onto 'em waitin' in the switch-yards when wewhistled in, an' the way we yanked them infants off the cars and trundled 'em over the pontoon bridge, an' hit the trail f'r the Issue House, was a high-class piece o' teamin'. We powdered across the country like the first batch of sooners at a reservation openin'. Out on the prairie was Reddyan' his punchers, slowly dribblin' the last of his steers into the delivery, too anxious f'r me an' the cavvs to be ashamed of their emaciation. Out behind a butte, he had concealed a bunch of cow-stuff he'd deppy-tized as mothers *pro tem* to my waifs. The right way t've done, o' course, would've been to incorporate the two bunches in a unassumin' way at a remoter place, an' drove 'em gently in as much like cattle o' the same family circles as yeh could make 'em look. But they wan't time. The end-gates was jerked out, an' the wagons



DRAWN BY E. BERT SMITH

Elkins was keepin' the flies off me.

ongently emptied like upsettin' a sleigh comin' home from spellin' school. Most all the orphans could an' did walk, an' I was so tickled at this testimonial to the egg-cure f'r youthful weakness, that we had 'em half way to the place where the knives o' their owners-elect was a waitin' 'em when I looked around an' seen Miss Ainsley, an' the Chamberlain lady she was a-stayin' with, standin' where they must 'a' seen the way we mussed the cavvs hair up in gettin' of 'em on the ground.

Gladys' eyes was a-blazin', an' they was a red spot in each cheek. She seemed sort o' pressin' forwards like she wanted to mix it up, an' her lady friend was tryin' to head her off. I saw she didn't reckonize me, an' I didn't thirst f'r reckonition. I knew that love ain't so blind as she's been advertised, an' that I wouldn't never,

no never, be a nater's nobleman no more if she ever tumbled to the fact that the human omelette runnin' this caff business was A. Driscoll. It was only a case of sweet-gal-graduate palpitation o' the heart anyhow, an' needed the bronzed cheek, the droopin' moustache, the range clo'es, the deadly gun, the diamond hitch, an' the centaur biz to keep it up to its wonted palp.

An' what was it that was offered to the gaze o' this romantic piece o' calicker? Try to rearlize the truth in all its heejusness. Here was the aforementioned Driscoll arrayed in what was once an A fifteen-dollar suit of clay-worsted, a good biled shirt, an' a new celluloid collar. But how changed from what had been but three short days ago the cinnnersure of the eye of every sure-thing or con-man on South Halsted Street? Seventy-five per cent of

eight cases of eggs had went billerin' over him. The shells of the same clung like barnacles to his apparel. His curlin' locks was matted an' mucilaged like he'd made a premature getaway from some liberal-minded shampooer; an' from under his beetlin' brows that looked like birds' nests from which broods had just hatched, glared eyes with vi'lence an' crime in every glance. Verily, Aconite was a beaut! An' here, a-comin' down upon him like the angel o' the Lord on the Assyrian host, come a starchy, lacey, filmy, ribbiny gal, that had onst let him hold her hand, by gum! her eyes burnin' with vengeance, an' that kinder corn-shucky rustlin' that emanated mysterious from her dress as she walked, a drawin' nearer an' nearer every breath.

"Gladys! Gladys!" says her lady friend. An' as Gladys slowed up, she says, lower: "I wouldn't interfere in this if I were you, dear!"

"I must!" says Gladys. "It's my duty! I can't permit dumb animals to be treated so without a protest. It is civic cowardice not to do disagreeable things for principle. I wish to speak to the man in charge, please!"

I kep' minglin' with the herd, not carin' to have disagreeable things done to me for principle, but she cuts me out, an' says, says she. "Do you know that there's a law against cruelty to dumb animals?"

"They ain't dumb," says I, trying to change my voice, an' officin' up to Reddy to shove 'em along to their fate while I held the foe in play. "When you've associated with these cute little cusses as long an' intermately as I have, ma'am, you'll know that they have a language an' an ellerquence all their own, that takes 'em out of the pervisions o' that law you speak of, an—"

Here's where I overplays my hand, an' lets her get onto the genuyne tones of my voice. I ortn't to done this, f'r she'd heared it at close range. An' to make a dead cinch out of a good gamblin' proposition, I looked her in the eyes. It was all off in a breath. She give a sort of gasp as if somethin' cold had hit her, an' went petrified, sort o' slow like.

"Oh!" says she, turnin' her head to her friend. "I understand now what it was

your husband was laughing about, and his odious jokes about fooling the inspector; and the bearing of the article he showed us in the Chicago paper! O, Mr. Driscoll, you to be so cruel; and to impose these poor motherless creatures upon those ignorant Indians, who are depending upon their living and becoming the nucleus of their pastoral industry; and the first step to a higher civilization! I don't wonder that you look guilty, or try—"

"I don't!" says I, f'r I didn't, as fer as the stock was concerned. "It's these here eight cases of eggs that make me look so. It's a matter o' clo's. An' the reds'll never raise cattle," says I, "or anything but trouble, in God's world. An' if these cavvs had as many mothers as a Mormon kid," I went on, "they'd be no better f'r stew!"

"Mr. Driscoll," says she, cuttin' in, "don't ever speak to me again. I shall expose this matter to the inspector!"

I tried to lift my hat, but it was stuck to my hair; an' the sight of me pullin' desperately at my own head had some effect on her, f'r she flees to her friend, actin' queer, but whuther laffin 'r cryin' I couldn't say, an' I don't s'pose she could. It's immaterial anyway, the main p'int bein' that her friend's husband, a friend of the senator's, persuaded her from havin' us all pinched, when she found that Reddy'd beat her to it with the cavvs, the last one of which was expirin' under the squaws' hatchets as she hove in sight of the issue, an' the soup-kittles was all a-steamin. It reely was too late to do anything, I guess.

That night I slep' in Oacoma jail. You naturally gravitate that way when fate has ground you about so fine, an' you begin to drift with the blizzard. I could 'a'stood the throw-down, but to be throwed down in a heap with eggs an' dirty clo'es, was too much. I took that suit an' made a bundle of it, an' out on the pontoon bridge I poked it into the Missouri with a pole. They're usin' the water to settle coffee with, I'm told, as fur down as Saint Joe, to this day—'s good as the whites of eggs, the cooks say. Then, havin' wired my resignation to Elkins, feelin' that the world held no vocation f'r me but the whoop-er-up business, I returned to the west side of the river as the only place

suited to my talons, an' went forth to expel the eggs an' tender memories from my system with wetness. I broke jail in the mornin' but in a week I come to myself ag'in on the same ol' cot in the same prehistoric calaboose, an' Mr. Elkins was keepin' the flies off me with one o' them brushes made of a fringed newspaper tacked to a stick.

"I've come," says he, "to take you

An' here's where I had a narrow escape. I wouldn't have faced her, the girl, you know, f'r no money; but as Jim went away, right at the door I seen through a little winder a shimmerin' of white and blue. It was her, herself! She must have met Jim before, f'r I heard her speak his name an' mine. He seemed to be per-lutely arguin' with her; an' then she went away with him. I breathed easier to see



DRAWN BY E. BERT SMITH

A-comin' on him, a ribbiny girl.

home, Aconite."

"All right," says I, "but can you fix it up with the authorities?"

"I'm just going over to get your discharge," replies he. "They seem quite willing to part with you, now that they discover that none of your victims have anything deeper than flesh wounds. I've give bonds not to let you have your guns this side of the Stanley County line. I'll be back in half-an-hour with the horses."

her go; an' then set down an' cried like a baby. A feller'll do that easy, when he's been on a tear, you know.

Jim an' I rode all that day sayin' never a word. But when we'd turned in that night I mentioned the matter.

"Mr. Elkins," says I, "she sure has got it in f'r me pretty strong, to foller me to jail to jump on me!"

"Aconite," says he, "I'll not deceive you. She has. Forget it!"

A Matter of Some Moment

BY WILLIAM J. LAMPTON

When the letter came I was sitting in my attic parlor struggling with a story on which I hoped to realize results of interest to my creditors.

It was merely an ordinary business letter enclosing a check, nothing more original in form or language than millions of business letters going through the mails every day.

The check, however, was worthy of more than passing notice. It was drawn on a London bank, signed by John Andrews, payable to the order of Philip B. Dent, and was for one hundred thousand pounds, sterling.

Possibly some, in these days of gigantic finance, may not think there was anything extraordinary about that check. But there was.

I was Philip B. Dent.

Yes, and the twenty-five dollars I was hoping to get for my story constituted a larger roll than had bulged my pockets in a long time.

Still, the shock was not great. I did not gasp, or commit any of the well-known excesses of sudden joy. The joke of my rich uncle in England some day remembering me was threadbare among my friends. It was almost as threadbare as some of them were. They had even sent me checks bearing his signature, during periods of depression in the demand for my literary products. This check was dated April 1st, although it was now only the first week in March. That was suspicious. Otherwise both it and the letter bore evidences of genuineness.

Very calmly I arose and, going across the hall, knocked at the studio door of Kate Shelby. Kate had promised to make a picture to go with my story. She made other pictures, and she made money; at least, as compared with what I made. She was an artist, but what she was going to be, some day, was of much more significance to me.

She responded cheerily to my knock—we used a private signal knock—and I went in with the check and the letter in my hand.

"What is it?" she asked, looking up from her work. Social calls were not permitted during business hours.

"I have received a check," I replied.

"It isn't the first check you have received in your career," she laughed. Kate likes to tease me, and I like anything she likes.

"But this is a financial check," I explained.

"Oh," she laughed again, "that is different. Did you get it from an editor?"

"No, from my uncle—in England," I added, because I feared she might call up the shade of another uncle to whom I was under financial obligations, though, heaven knows, a check would have been about the last thing he would have sent to me.

"That is different, also," she said. "What is the amount of it?" Kate was thrifty and the amount of a check appealed to her more than any sentiment which might have been connected with it.

"There it is; see for yourself." I handed it to her and she studied it for a moment.

"My," she exclaimed, with easy indifference—she had joked me about my rich uncle on more than one occasion—"it is for a hundred thousand dollars."

"Pounds," I corrected her, gravely.

"Oh, money by the pound!" she shrieked. "A hundred thousand pounds of it! That's fifty tons, isn't it? Fifty ton of money! Gee, Phil, ain't that a load to carry?"

"You don't appear to sag down very much under it," I chaffed her.

"Really, though, how much is it? What is a pound worth?"

"Five dollars, or thereabouts."

"Then a hundred thousand pounds would be five hundred thousand dollars, wouldn't it?"

"Quite so, and still they say women are not good at arithmetic."

It was plain that she was not taking the matter seriously. Neither was I. It was too much like a fairy story for grown-ups as we were.

"What are you going to do with it?" she went on badgering me. "Save it to buy furniture for our flat when you have sold

stories enough to marry and go to house-keeping on?"

Kate was the dearest girl in the world, of course, but she couldn't help teasing me.

"You seem to think it a joke," I said, assuming a serious manner.

"You with a check for a hundred thousand pounds, or dollars, or anything, is too funny not to be," she laughed, almost rudely. I admit she had grounds for levity.

"Well, look it over," I said. "There is no indication that it is not genuine, is there?"

She surveyed me as a doctor might, tapped her forehead significantly and shook her head, still observing me.

"Oh, I'm not dotty." I resented the insinuation. "There's the check. What are you going to do about it?"

"You don't actually think it is good, do you?" she asked, more seriously.

"I don't know. My uncle is rich enough to do it if he wanted to."

"Yes," she contended, "but he isn't foo—" She stopped. "Oh, I didn't mean that, Phil, dear," she cried, throwing down the check and coming over to kiss me. "Of course, it would be only too beautiful to dream of if he had done it, dear," she consoled, "but it simply isn't possible, and that is all there is to it."

"That's the way it strikes me," I said, getting down to practical talk. "But if it should be the real thing, I'll bet he's got a string tied to it somewhere that will pull value received to him all right. Uncle John isn't the man to give up something for nothing, especially to his loving and devoted nephew, the old curmudgeon. The letter is from his bankers. I suppose I'll be getting one from him personally before many days."

"Anyway," she broke in skeptically, "we'll wait and not begin to spend our money before we get it."

"We can't," I came back, in vindictive mood, "and that is one place where the string is tied. You see, the check is dated April 1st, three weeks off. You may rest assured something is going to happen under Uncle John's direction before it is time for him to make his check good. You just make a note of that, will you?"

She said she thought a note with a check of that size behind it was safe in making,

and we went out to dinner together at a "beanery" we knew to be so clean it was godly.

After dinner I handed the check to the cashier. "Will you accept that for two dinners?" I inquired. "You know me."

"Sorry, Mr. Dent," he responded, glancing over it, "but we'd prefer eighty cents in plain money."

"That's a compliment to your uncle, isn't it?" Kate laughed, and I echoed the sentiment with the wish that the old chap might know in what esteem his financial credit was held in America.

We passed the evening in Kate's studio over the picture she was drawing to illustrate my story, and we were quite happy notwithstanding we stood in the shadow of so much money and presently might not have to work any more.

"Don't let your financial troubles keep you awake, Phil, as some people do theirs," she cautioned me when she told me good night, and I tossed the check carelessly on her desk where she as carelessly left it to shift for itself among her papers. Our confidence in my uncle's contribution was not very thoroughly established.

Next morning, no letter of explanation having arrived from London, we resumed discussion of the check and finally determined to take it to the bank where Kate kept her nest egg—mine was not so large that I needed a bank to keep it in—to find out something about it. Kate introduced me to the man behind the bronze bars and I passed the check into him for inspection. He looked it over and said he would have to submit it to the cashier. Kate and I looked at each other, undecided whether to laugh or to be serious. The man came back and told us to step into the cashier's private office. Then we began to look serious.

Oh, the puissance of plunks! Even a check that mightn't be more than an April fool joke possessed a potency transcending the best efforts of my pen. I had written columns and columns of stuff, able and brilliant, I was willing to swear, and yet that cashier had never asked me to come into his private office until he saw that check to my order. And I hadn't written it, either.

I explained to him how I had received it, and he said it was good as far as he was able to judge, but that it would have to go through the regular course and they would let me know about it within three weeks. I suppose a cablegram might have been sent and an answer received at once, but the tremendous possibilities which thrust themselves upon me in the thought that the check was good so overcame me that I didn't think to suggest it. Besides, I didn't know anything about banking, and the cashier knew it all. I left the check and my address, and the cashier bowed us out and asked us to call again. He even told Kate that he had seen some of her illustrations and had read one or two of my stories with pleasure. We began to get our first taste of having money.

"My," exclaimed Kate, on the sidewalk, "I feel as if we ought to be getting into a carriage."

"I'm thinking about the string that's tied to the check, if it proves to be good," I responded, for my uncle was as obstinate as a mule and had peculiar views on the subject of marriage. He was a rank old bachelor, and I was his only sister's only child and the nearest person in the world to him by blood, though I had not seen him since I was five years old, a period covering twenty-two years. I was quite as much a Yankee as he was a Britisher, and he objected to my making the ties of adoption any stronger. I knew he was willing to tempt me to the limit.

We were on the public thoroughfare where emotional demonstrations are almost improprieties, but I caught Kate by the hand.

"Whatever happens, dear," I said to her with a solemnity that made her laugh, "you'll stand by me, won't you?"

"Well, I guess yes, Phil, old chappie," she fairly hurrahed at me. "You were a pretty nice boy when you were poor, and now that you are a millionaire, you are simply irresistible."

"But I'm only half a millionaire," I argued.

"Half a slab is better than no pie," she came back at me, and I saw that it was impossible to compel her to a serious consideration of the check. I had not convinced myself, but it did seem to be such

a cruel sort of joke, that I didn't want to believe any human being could play it on one of his kind.

In the late afternoon mail came a letter from my uncle. I confess to a little nervousness as I opened it. I had had numerous letters from the same source, but none quite as full of potentialities as this one promised. That it meant I might be rich I was sure, but the price I might be asked to pay took away the enthusiasm which ordinarily would be incited by such a stroke of luck. It was brief, as my uncle's letters usually were, and to the point, as usual:

MY DEAR NEPHEW:

It is three months since I received your letter, but, as you know, I have something else to do than write letters. I am writing now what is a business letter, though you, with your impracticable ideas, may not recognize it as such.

I am growing old and feel that I need some one of my own blood to be near me. I want you to come to London and live with me. As an evidence of my good faith, which you may have had cause to doubt in the past, I have sent, through my bankers, a check to your order for £100,000.

There are no conditions except that you are not to marry. I hate women.

You are to give me your answer and agreement to the condition, sworn to before a notary and witnesses, before April 1st, or payment of check will be stopped.

Lovingly, your uncle,

JOHN ANDREWS.

The string to the check was vividly, luridly apparent. He hated women. He had never known such a woman as Kate Shelby. What an old brute he was! Would I give her up for his miserable money? Never!

I took the letter over to Kate's studio, and gave it to her.

"There," I said, restraining my feelings by great effort, "read that. I told you there was a string tied to it somewhere. And such a string!"

She read it slowly, twice. I waited for her to speak. She sat very still, looking away from me.

"Well," I exclaimed, impatiently, "well, what do you say?"

"It gives you the chance of your life, Phil," she replied, turning to me and struggling not to be the woman.

I went over and kissed her. I think I kissed her twice.

"You have said exactly what you should have said, dear," I laughed, half hysterically. "It gives me the chance of my life, and I'm going to tell the old cynic and crank what I think of him. Do I want his infernal check at the value he puts on it? Money may be everything to him, but it isn't to me. Why, Kate," and I blubbered, "I'll have to give you up to get it."

"Yes, Phil," she cried and laughed, "but I'm not worth half a million dollars."

"Of course you're not," I admitted. "You're worth ten times that."

She kissed me good and hard. Kate is a trump.

"That's pure sentiment, Phil," she said. "The check is business, and this is a commercial age. I am practical and can see farther than you can. You must not lose an opportunity that is all golden and so rare that it scarcely seems real, for the sake of a sentimental fancy. You must accept the condition."

"Kate!" was all the answer I had, but I put so much of my very soul into it that her eyes grew moist and she could not look at me.

"I mean it, Phil," she persisted, growing hard of voice and set of face. "If you will not give me up, I shall give you up. You shall not make such a sacrifice for my sake. Why, Phil," quickly changing her manner, "I never could forgive myself for letting you marry me under such circumstances. Every time there was a bill collector requested to call next week, or we had to move to square ourselves with the landlord, I'd think what I'd brought you to, and I couldn't stand it, Phil, dear; I simply could not endure the terrific strain."

How much further she would have gone on this line, I do not know, but I began to rave at her, and to swear and to act generally in a manner to force her to believe I was just the kind of a person she should be rid of. Then I rushed out of the studio before she had time to offer any arguments in rebuttal. There was only one way to settle the question, and I determined to take that promptly. I went straight to the telegraph office.

"Here," I commanded the clerk, after I had composed a message which seemed

appropriate to the occasion, "send this at once. How much is it?"

The clerk read it over as telegraph clerks do, jabbing his pen into each word as if he wanted to fasten it to the paper, "Condition refused. See you DAMNED first." I had written the word "damned" big and black.

"We can't send this," he said, in a shocked tone.

"Why not? Wires down?" I snapped at him. "I'll pay for it."

"It's profanity."

"It's justifiable," I insisted, "and I'll pay extra to have it go that way. That's why I wrote that word big and black."

"That won't make any difference," he smiled. "The telegraph wires don't recognize italics."

"Can I send it with a 'd' and a blank and a 'd'?" I begged. "That isn't profane. It's real baby-food language. It's only an abbreviation and might mean 'Doctor of Divinity.' You'd send a 'Doctor of Divinity' over your highly moral wires wouldn't you?" This was couched in sarcastic accents.

"I don't know; I'll have to see about it," and the clerk went back and talked to a coatless man under a green shade at a desk. One might have imagined he was a Japanese official and I was trying to send war news out of Nippon.

The clerk, returning, explained that I might send a plain "D" with no visible evidence of its sinister motives. I was too eager to get at my uncle to put the case through the courts and secure a mandamus, so I sent the message as censored. It was shorn of its manly vigor, I thought, and I feared that my uncle would think I was a milk-sop, but I was forced to yield to the soulless corporation at whose mercy I was. I was also compelled to pay as much for the one letter as for the entire word. The bill was two dollars and something, and I thought if the war kept up very long at that rate, I should have to borrow the sinews from Kate.

When I went back to my den I stopped at Kate's door, thinking to go in and report what I had done. I was about to knock when I heard a faint sobbing. I never thought of Kate, and looked about to see if any of our fellow-craftsmen were

in trouble. Kate's transom was open. I heard another sob, and I must have made some noise, for silence followed. The dear, good girl. She was suffering, but not for me to know. I couldn't go in then, and quietly slipped along the hall to my own place.

An hour or more later I stopped for her to go to dinner with me, but she was out. This was not unusual, and I went to a restaurant where I dined when she was not with me. I did not return, as I had to go down to one of the morning newspaper offices to fill an assignment. I should not have gone that evening, but there was fifteen dollars in it for me, and there might be more telegraph tolls to pay before I had fully impressed Mr. John Andrews with my opinion of him. I turned in that night at half past two, and was not up next morning until eleven. As soon as I had dressed I went to Kate's studio. She was not there. I consulted the janitress.

"Miss Kate left us this morning," that useful personage informed me, apparently surprised that I didn't know all about it.

"Left?" I gasped, for I had a sudden presentiment. "Where has she gone?"

"She didn't say."

"When will she be back?"

"She didn't say that, either."

"Didn't she leave any word?"

"No, sir. She's moved her things. But she's all right," she hastened in her defense, noticing something peculiar in my looks, I suppose, "because her rent is paid a week yet."

Gone, and never a word! Nothing left to me now but money. I cursed my uncle roundly, but not aloud. I knew if I said a word the janitress would call the police or turn in a fire alarm, so I set my jaws and walked away in grim silence. The janitress was equally silent, after her last communication. She must have felt there was some impending danger which it was best to stand from under.

I didn't eat any breakfast. I wandered about the streets looking for Kate. Vain search. I might as well have looked for purity in ward politics. What occurred during the following week is not a matter of record. It could not well be. My

movements were too erratic for tabulation. Not a few persons thought I had lost my mental equipoise. All I knew was that I had lost Kate, and nothing else counted. She had disappeared as absolutely as if she had fallen off the earth into unknowable space. It was not a case for the police, or I should have applied to that source of consolation. I knew why she had gone, if I did not know where. The police could not fathom the fathomless depths of woman's sacrifice.

My cablegram had elicited no reply and I was wounded sorely by my uncle's slight. I expected some kind of an answer. But two weeks slipped by and none came. I had thrown away the better part of three dollars in vain wrath. At last, when the third week had begun and I had given up hope of all kinds and was contemplating the river where the current was swift and no boats handy, the ocean gave up the expected message.

"It read: 'You young ass, come on over here, or I shall marry her myself.'"

To add to the unpleasantness of this it was marked "Collect," and I had to put up my watch before I could read it. If I had known its contents previously, I should never have done so. I might be a young ass, but I didn't care to pay several dollars to be told so. If my uncle were not the—however, I had forgotten the check. I was stamping around my room, with the message in my hand, swearing one minute, and puzzling over its meaning the next when the carrier delivered the noon mail. There was a dun or two or three—it's strange how such visitors always come when one is least prepared for them—and a note from the bank to call. What might be there for me, I had no idea, but it was comforting to know that it was not a dun. I went around at once. I wanted it over with. Already that miserable check had caused me more sorrow and bitterness of woe in two weeks than my poverty had done in all my previous life. The man behind the bronze bars salaamed to me when I appeared—he hadn't forgotten me, though he had seen me only once—and escorted me to the cashier's office. That gentleman arose and shook hands with me effusively. Before he had asked me to take the biggest

chair and handed out a box of choice cigars, I knew I had money.

It was a queer feeling—this of having money. I had never known it before. Now that I had met it, it was as if I had met a good friend who stood ready to do anything I asked. Stronger than this feeling was the consciousness of power it gave to me. I could feel this in the manner of the first two people I met after my accession to fortune. This was not the purchasing power of money, but that mysterious influence it exercises upon mankind. I could not have bought the cashier and the other man, but they were mine as they could not have been if the check had been worthless. Exaltation and exultation, hand in hand, ran riotously through my being. I could have shouted for joy. I forgot everything except myself.

"My dear Mr. Dent," said the cashier, suavely, as I sat expectant before him, trying to be calm, "the check is all right. We shall be very glad to place it to your credit and be of any further service to you that we may."

"Five hundred thousand dollars?" I responded, rolling the figures as a sweet morsel under my tongue.

"About that," he smiled.

"And I can use as much of it as I please, when I please, and as I please?"

"Certainly. It is absolutely yours."

It was like a beautiful dream, come true, and I was rich—rich—rich. Then suddenly came the nightmare—two nightmares. What good was the money if I did not have Kate to enjoy it with me: Kate, dear Kate, who had been so much more to me than money had ever been? And the date of the check? It was not yet April 1st, and I had not accepted the condition. I had already lost Kate, and I stood fair to lose the money. My face must have betrayed my feelings, because the cashier manifested such alarm as a doctor might over a rich and chronic patient, suddenly taken worse.

"What's wrong, Mr. Dent?" he asked, with much solicitude.

"I was thinking about the date of the check," I replied. "You know it is not due until the first of April."

"Oh, that will be all right," he laughed, in evident relief. If he had known what

I did, he might not have been so confident. "That is a mere matter of form."

Whether it was or not, I did not purpose losing all my grip, and for once set sentiment aside and got down to business.

"Can I have a thousand dollars now?" I inquired.

"Five thousand, if you want that much," he said, and jingled his little bell for a minion who responded quickly. "Bring Mr. Dent one of those large blank check books."

It was not much to say, but it braced me up not a little. I thanked him, signed the papers he asked me to sign, without question, got the thousand dollars and left the bank. If it wasn't all according to Hoyle, it was the cashier's business, not mine. The check difficulty being settled, at least for the present, I went at once to my room to wrestle with the cablegram problem. Who was Uncle John going to marry? His feelings concerning women must have undergone a change. But mine hadn't. I stopped on the way to recover my watch. I made the man change a hundred dollar bill. He did not attempt to conceal his surprise and suspicion, but he said nothing. I was too good a customer. Not large, possibly, but often.

With money in my pocket my brain cleared rapidly, and when I read the cablegram again, I reached a conclusion at once. I would go to England and have it to a finish with the old man. I would buy a round trip ticket, so the expense would be on him both ways. The balance of the thousand—but there should be no balance. For once my revered relation should contribute something towards improving my condition. He might have the other four hundred and ninety-nine thousand, but this one was mine, all mine, and I would blow it to suit my own fancy. I would have it out with him in his lair and come back, refreshed and invigorated, to America and Kate. Yes, Kate; for when she knew I had refused the money, as she must know, because she could keep tab on me as I could not on her; she would come back to me—back to the old place, the work we loved, and the happy companionship that had always been ours.

I cabled my uncle forthwith: "Arrive, Liverpool, Saturday, *Lucania*." It was

brief, because I was paying for it myself, and I had not yet acquired the habit of reckless expenditure.

A week later I arrived at Liverpool. The voyage had not been agreeable. I was seasick. I raged against my uncle. I was tempted to jump overboard and swim back to resume my search for the lost Kate. I wondered if money made all of its possessors as happy as it had made me.

I went off of the ship in doubt whether to hit my uncle before speaking to him, or speak to him first and thump him afterwards. I reached the pier sullen and ugly. So engrossed was I in my troubles that I heeded nothing until some one sang out: "Hello, Phil," and before I could take any action, a woman's arms were around my neck and I was being kissed quite regardless of the conventionalities.

It was Kate, of course. I needed no other angel, come from heaven or anywhere else, to tell me that.

"Oh," I gasped and gurgled, falling up against her in a state of collapse, and as quickly pulling myself together and trying

to break away. "Where the dev—" I began, when she stuck her finger in my mouth.

"Sh-sh," she cried, warningly, "your good uncle is here. Let me introduce you. Uncle John," she cried, in radiant mood, "this is your wicked and profane nephew. Philip, kiss your uncle like a nice boy, and be friends."

My uncle wasn't, to say, exactly kissable, remembering what I had just passed through, but he was the typically handsome Englishman of the elderly sort, and I thrust out my hand cordially.

"Oho, you young cub, you'll see me damned first, will you?" he roared, slapping me on the back, and then actually hugging me, while, I'm blessed, if there weren't tears in his eyes, and Kate sniffled.

It was all simple enough. Kate had come over and settled matters to suit herself. It also suited me, and the way we led Uncle John around by his rusty old, tender heart strings was a perfect shame, but he seemed to like it.

Money isn't half bad, after all, if you only go about it right.

The Chrysalis

BY JEANNETTE SCOTT BENTON

I

THE CHAPERON'S VERSION



HAVE always considered chaperoning rather amusing, but I never supposed it could be wildly exciting until last Thursday night, and I have been a chaperon for nearly six years. I suppose the reason the girls are always asking me is because I appreciate their way of looking at things, as I am only twenty-six and have not had a chance to forget so much.

I view with wonder and melancholy, though, the confidence I have had in myself. I actually thought I understood people, and could tell about what they would do on most occasions.

I am not even thinking now; I am simply gasping and saying to all the people I know, "I never was so surprised in my life," and "I never imagined," until I feel like a parrot.

This is the way it happened. About three weeks ago I received a letter from Governor Dumont. He is a cousin of mama's. It was a long letter with a good deal of "whereas" in it, but the idea was that he would be pleased if it would please me to invite his daughters, Jessamine and Kitty, to visit me.

It seemed Jessamine had become altogether too interested in a young army officer to suit them, and Governor Dumont had informed her very decidedly that it must be stopped.

"But Mrs. Dumont does not seem to consider that quite sufficient, and thinks it would be better to remove Jessamine for a while."

I remembered that sentence because I thought it sounded quite pathetic. The governor is always so cock-sure of himself. And they both thought Carleton and me the place to remove her to. Because it was so very gay; "so much going on in a social way," they understood, "and if you are like your mother," the governor said very gallantly, "you are the queen of it all."

Well, mama had it easier then. There were not three or four others sitting up nights to think of things to outdo her. I was delighted about the girls. I hadn't seen them since we were all children, but they have been the principal occupation of the society columns in all their state papers for three years, so I knew they must be very much all right. I sent them an extremely cordial invitation, and they came immediately.

It was just as I expected, they were simply dear. Kitty was the demure, appealing kind, while Jessamine was perfectly stunning. Just the type of girl you would expect a military man to lose his head over. She was not a bit mooney or crushed either, and seemed perfectly willing to be distracted.

All our men did their best to help me, too, that is all but Dicky M'Lahey. He is so lazy and lordly and used to girls throwing their caps at him, that he will not exert himself a particle. But I will say for Dicky, when you get past those airs of his, he is the biggest-hearted, most loyal boy I ever saw. I like Dicky, even if he has disturbed all the foundations of my conceit.

Last Thursday I planned a small informal dinner at the club house. I only arranged for eight couples, but I determined I would take Molly Sylvester and get her away from those overpowering aunts, once in her life.

There are three of them, regular gorgons; the kind you read about and think dreadfully overdrawn. Molly is the child of their only brother. He escaped when he was quite young and married a girl in New York. They were both drowned out yachting one day, and that poor little mite came here. She was only three years old, and I give you my word those awful women have never let her out of their sight since until Thursday night. And then!

Their theories on girl raising seem to be a combination of Turkish and Puritan Presbyterian, and the result is, that the child has no more individuality than a bisque doll. She is tremendously pretty, but so wooden and prim that you want to throw things at her.

I had thought for some time that it was my Christian duty to give her a chance to draw a



DRAWN BY D. J. LAVIN

Molly.

long breath without their supervising her to see that it was properly done, so I approached Miss Lucy; she is the awfully fat one, and awfully fat people generally wilt easier, even if they do appear dangerous. I told her what a harmless little dinner it was; such a few people, and apologized regretfully for not inviting them, mentioning, of course, that it was in honor of Governor Dumont's daughters. I think that was what fetched her, for they think a great deal of position, in spite of all their queer and lofty ways. So she actually consented, with a sort of gasp.

I felt like a rescue party when we

stopped for the child, and she came out alone dressed in a brown silk afternoon sewing-circle sort of thing—she always has things that would be catalogued as “exceedingly serviceable, durable, and warranted not to fade”—and was so prim and “good” I was sorry I had rescued her, until it occurred to me to have Dicky M’Lahey take her to dinner, and it was such a lovely revenge on him, that I concluded it was all right.

So at dinner I put him with Molly and opposite Jessamine. It really is much easier to notice how handsome any one is across the table than at a person’s elbow. Dicky is extremely nice looking himself, and I thought they might both make an impression.

During the dinner, Albert, the house-boy, came in and said he had a note for Miss Kitty.

Kitty read it, then tossed it over to me.

“I am awfully sorry; such a bore,” she said, “the rector of St. James, you know, our church. I am sure I don’t know what to do.”

I read it, and it seemed he was at our house, and had called at her father’s request to see the girls on his way east, and was obliged to take the nine-thirty express.

“Do?” I said. “Why I will send the auto after him immediately. He will have plenty of time both to see you girls and have his dinner. I should dislike very much to disappoint your father.”

“Thank you,” Kitty said, in a sort of resigned way. “I suppose we will have to do something.”

Jessamine leaned forward, “What is it, Kitty?” she asked.

“Why, Mr. St. Albins is at Cousin Marion’s. He called to see us on his way east. Marion is sending the auto after him.”

Jessamine laughed and looked at her sister, and I could not understand why Kitty should drop her eyes and look so demure, until Mr. St. Albins came in.

He was young and very distinguished looking. I think the costume of an Episcopal rector makes a man look very interesting, especially if he is young and handsome.

“So, so, Miss Kitty,” I thought, “I wonder if your father fancies the church more than the army.”



DRAWN BY D. J. LAVIN

James.



DRAWN BY D. J. LAVIN

He is so lazy and lordly.

In the midst of it all Dick M'Lahey came up and asked me if he could take Molly down on the beach. I noticed he had that mischievous look in his eyes that he always has when he knows he is doing something he shouldn't.

Of course I never would have thought a second about any other girl, but it was mean of me to let Molly go, because her aunts did in a way trust me, but there was so much to think of that I did not really consider; just said some silly little thing to him and told him to run along.

I did wonder, though, why he should wish to go to the beach with any one so stupid as Molly, when there was Jessamine and two or three of the other girls, who were really interesting and jolly.

Mr. St. Albins was delightful. I was perfectly charmed with him, and tried to persuade him to stay over. I thought he must be satisfactory to the governor, or he would not have asked him to call on the girls. He was very nice about it, but said it was impossible to change his plans. I regretted it on Kitty's account, for he seemed very much interested in her.

A few minutes before he left, Jessamine came up and said:

"I believe I will ride to the station with Mr. St. Albins, Cousin Marion, if you do not object. It is a lovely night, and I want to talk with him a little any way."

I looked at Kitty, but she did not say

anything, so I supposed the girls understood each other, until I found Kitty crying, out on the veranda, after they left.

I was very much provoked at Jessamine; it seemed so unnecessary for her to interfere with Kitty like that. As soon as she got herself together and came in, I arranged a little dance to distract her mind.

It must have been nearly ten o'clock when I happened to glance toward the door and saw James standing there, looking so queer that I went over to him immediately.

"Where is Miss Dumont, James?" I asked, as soon as I was anywhere near him.

"She and the gentleman both went off on the express," he whispered hoarsely, and he looked downright excited. James is not very well trained. You can imagine the way I rushed for Kitty. She pulled me into a window-seat and held my hands tight. She was pretty white herself.

"I know, Cousin Marion, it was not treating you one bit nice, but Jessamine could not help it. Lieutenant Temple was unexpectedly transferred to Fort Hamilton, and he did not know when he would have a chance even to see her again, so they were just desperate."

"But I thought he was a clergyman," I gasped. "I can't understand anything, Kitty."

"Don't you see?" she explained. "If he had come here in his uniform, or even

in civilian dress, you would have suspected, and we knew father had put Jessamine in your hands, so it would have been very embarrassing for you; you might have felt that you were obliged to interfere, too, so Jessamine thought of his borrowing a suit of his cousin's, who is a clergyman—our clergyman in fact—and then the child blushed beautifully.

"Kitty!" I said.

"Papa doesn't care," she murmured, "because the church can't send any one to any horrible place they want to, like the army. They have arranged with a friend of Mr. St. Albins—Lieutenant Temple borrowed his name as well as his clothes—to meet them at Owens and marry them on the train." Then she broke down and cried dreadfully.

"I shall miss Jessamine so," she wailed.

Of course explanations had to be made, and every one was so excited, and I was awfully stirred up for quite a while. When I collected myself enough to think coherently and take notice of anything, it was eleven o'clock.

"Where in the world are Dick M'Lahey and Molly Sylvester?" I asked. No one had seen them. I never was so provoked at any one in my life as I was at Richard for a minute.

I rushed out to look for them, and there he was just putting her into that little car of his.

He turned to me and he looked excited, too, but there was something in his face I had never seen there before, and he was helping Molly as if she might melt and get away from him.

"What in the world, Dick?" I commenced.

"It is all right, Mrs. Martin," he interrupted. "Molly and I are engaged, and we are going home to tell the aunts."

I was pretty hysterical by that time, and I just shrieked, it seemed so funny.

Then Molly sprang out of the auto and came to me and put both arms around my neck.

"You don't think it is wrong, do you?" she asked in the most imploring way.

She was trembling all over, and she was the prettiest thing there in the moonlight I ever saw in my life. "Expressionless! prim!" why she was perfectly bewitching.

I cuddled her and actually cried, she was so pathetic and dear in spite of her being so happy.

Then they went off as if getting to those dreadful aunts was the most-to-be-desired thing in the world. I heard yesterday that they all fainted when Dick told them. They are up now, though, for Miss Martha came over this morning and sternly informed me that "it was very irregular and undignified, but it showed that young men appreciated a girl who was properly brought up."

Then she looked at me as if she thought I was a thwarted criminal. I could see she was pleased as possible all the while.

What is worrying me to the verge of distraction is, how it happened?

I know Richard M'Lahey no more expected to propose to the child when he went to the beach than he did to me. Now he couldn't have proposed to that little chrysalis of a Molly before she turned into a butterfly. Still, if he didn't, what broke the chrysalis?

That is why I have lost all my self-confidence, for I haven't a glimmer of an explanation.

I have not heard from Governor Dumont yet.

II

MOLLY'S VERSION OF IT

I did not know one girl could feel so different in two days. It is as if I had been living in a stiff little room with the blinds drawn and portraits of all my ancestors on the walls and nothing but haircloth furniture in it. Yes, haircloth, because I think that is the most dreadful.

Then, suddenly, all things seemed changed. It was as if some one should throw the blinds wide, and outside every thing would be one glory of flowers and bird song and sunshine and I was to go out in it for ever and ever.

Just three days ago Mrs. Martin asked me to go out to a dinner at the Country Club House. She has two young ladies visiting her—the Misses Dumont. Their father is Governor Dumont, and they are beautiful girls. They look like the pictures of girls on the magazine covers and calendars. The aunts were not invited, not

one of them. I didn't know whether I wanted to go or not. It almost frightened me to think of going alone, and yet it did seem nice to do so.

Mrs. Martin is small and moves around like a humming bird. She has the dearest dimple, and she smiled at Aunt Lucy and said she "wanted Governor Dumont's daughters to meet the nicest girls." I thought it was good of her to say that, and Aunt Lucy said I could go.

When I went up stairs to dress for it yesterday, I thought I would wear my brown silk, because I would not have to worry about injuring it. Aunt Lucy came up. I always feel sorry to have her bother about things, because she is so very fleshy. It takes her two or three minutes to get so she can talk after she comes up stairs.

I was doing my hair when she came. It is such a mess, and so curly, I am always glad when I can get enough hair pins in to hold it. It is a bad color, too. Aunt Jane says that such yellow-brown hair and black eyes are not a proper combination, so I don't enjoy doing it very well.

Aunt Lucy was very much pleased when she saw my brown silk on the bed. She said Aunt Martha was afraid I would wear my white, but she knew I was too sensible to trail a nice gown around at a club house dinner. She told me to be very careful, that Mrs. Martin was no chaperon at all. She had seen her herself, time and again, take girls out and then leave them to go where they pleased, an hour at a time. She said that she and Aunt Jane and Aunt Martha resented it very much, the way Mrs. Martin had done. She knew very well they had never allowed me to go anywhere in my life without one of them. She thought it was very flippant, too, the way Mrs. Martin said:

"So sorry I can't ask you, Miss Sylvester, but it is just a small informal dinner, and I am going to take all

the responsibility myself this time."

Aunt Lucy said she couldn't say anything, and I suppose she couldn't. She told me I must be sent home by ten, and I must not think of sitting out on the veranda with any young man, for Mrs. Martin could not be with all of us. And of course she couldn't. She said though to put on my thick soled shoes; that if several walked down to the lake I could go with them. Then Aunt Jane called up that Mrs. Martin's automobile was coming.



DRAWN BY D. J. LAVIN

So I approached Miss Lucy.

I peeped out through the parlor blinds. Mrs. Martin and her two guests were in the automobile. It seemed just filled with lacy dresses and pretty parasols.

Grandma looked out, too, then she looked at me so funny.

"Dear me, child," she said, "you will look like a little brown tabby cat among a lot of white angoras."

Aunt Martha was very much shocked.

"Why, mother!" she said, "how strange you talk. To me, Molly is a reproach to the others in the good judgment she shows. How would all that chiffon and perishable

stuff look if they should get dew on it? Would you want Molly to spoil her handsome white dress?"

Then grandma answered real sharp. "If she did, couldn't she buy another, or ten others if she wanted to? John Sylvester didn't leave his daughter a pauper, did he?"

Aunt Jane explained to me in the hall that grandmother was growing old, and she was afraid she was a little childish, so I must not mind what she said.

Then after I got into the automobile Mrs. Martin leaned over and whispered, "Did the aunts think a white frock frivolous and reckless?"

I thought it was very impolite of Mrs. Martin, but I told her I put it on myself, because I thought it would be more suitable. She sat up very straight and looked at me a minute. Then she laughed.

"I think I will ask Dick M'Lahey to take you out to dinner," she said. "He has been very inattentive to my guests; he needs waking up."

I don't know what she meant, but my heart throbbed right up into my throat, because—but I am going to wait for that.

Mr. M'Lahey looks like the pictures of the young men who go with the magazine

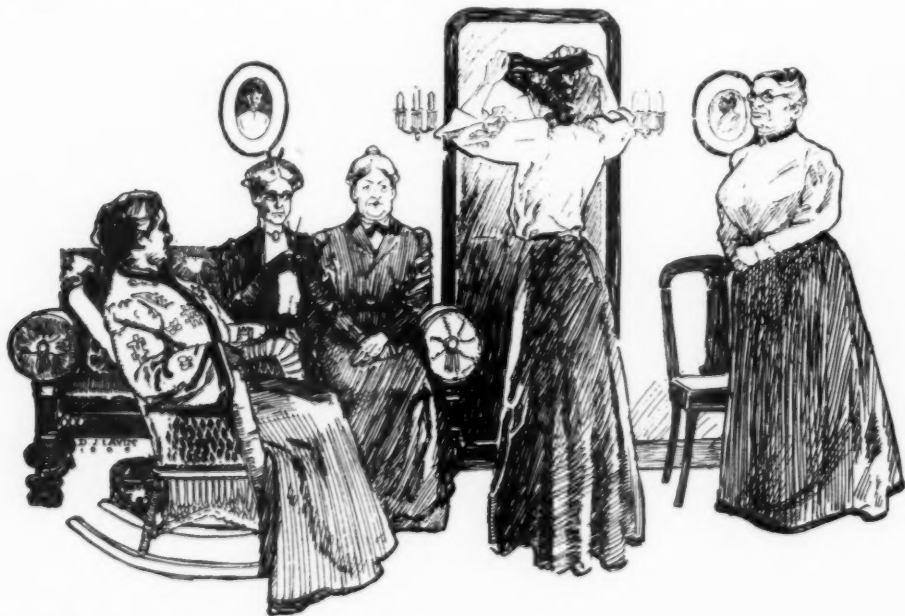
girls, as if he could swim and ride and play foot ball and fight. But every time you look into his face it makes your heart jump, it is so clean and fine and his eyes say so many things.

He did take me to dinner. I couldn't say any thing. It seemed so beautiful just to be there. I knew he was looking at me, though. Finally he said:

"Do you know, I have known you, let me see, ten years. You were trotting around with that queer old governess of yours when I was in High. Jove, but you were a pretty little girl. Then the vacations when I came back from college—why, even then I never thought of home and the quiet old street, without seeing you and the old ladies as part of the picture. Now I have been back three years and this is the first time I ever talked to you in my life."

I know I looked surprised, because he went right on:

"Oh, of course, we have held a good many conversations assisted by those indefatigable aunts of yours, but I never, I repeat, I never talked to you before. How was it worked? Did Mrs. Martin hypnotize them and leave them in a pathetic row, then carry you off?"



DRAWN BY D. J. LAVIN

"Couldn't she buy another?"



DRAWN BY D. J. LAVIN

"I felt like a rescue party."

I did not think that was a respectful way for even Mr. M'Lahey to talk, so I told him that my aunts gave me permission to come, of course.

He couldn't have been listening to what I said, though, because I heard him say something about "a beautiful chump," and we were not talking about anything like that.

Then I felt him looking at me, and some way I had to look. His eyes were sparkling and he commenced to talk rather low.

"See here," he said, "do you know what we are going to do after dinner? Do you see that moonlight out there? We are not going to waste it. We are going down to the lake, you and I, and watch that light go slipping over the waves. Did you ever watch moonlight with a man?"

I couldn't think of anything, my head was going around so. I just told him "No, I never had."

No one seemed to notice when we went away. Outside everything looked white and still and big. The long board walk

went straight to the bluff, then dropped over to the beach and some way I did not think about any thing; the aunts, or any body.

There was a garden seat back in a little cove, and he took me to it.

"Come," he said, "we will sit here and watch the moonlight. Do you feel the mystery everywhere? The solemn woods, the treacherous silver lake. Listen and look. The air is full of beautiful unseen things that charm, bewitch, conjure you."

Think of it, a great fine man to know and feel these things. I am afraid I slipped a little nearer on the bench. I wanted to touch him. Some way I did not feel so lonely as I had all the rest of my life; but I told him how I had felt it when I stood at my window summer nights, and ran away from it because I was afraid. Then I stopped, somehow it seemed so intimate.

And then the most wonderful thing happened. So wonderful that it seems as if it must be a dream, only I know it isn't.

He bent over so his face was quite near mine.

"Molly," he said, "you beautiful doll. Do you really feel and think and talk all by yourself? I wonder if you can be shaken into an expression, or an emotion. You have no idea how much I would like to find out, but how can I? Now there are your eyes, you know—they are beautiful—I really think the most beautiful in shape and color I ever saw, but you don't let any one see anything behind them. You don't even have any pretty little tricks with them like other girls. They are just eyes to see with. Then here's tonight. Why, it's a night capable of giving Diana a palpitation. The scent of those blossoming elders is maddeningly sweet, the moonlight is wine, yet you sit there a prim little brown splotch and won't talk to me—won't even look at me."

"I wish you would not talk that way," I told him, "you frighten me. Aunt Lucy said I must not even promenade with a gentleman. What would she think if she knew I were here?"

He threw back his head and laughed until the tears stood in his eyes. Then he stopped suddenly.

"Do you know," he said, "those aunts of yours have done the most wonderful job of training yet! A convent is a variety show to what they have given you. No one would believe it who hadn't seen you. You are so pretty there must be something behind it. Can't you wake up?"

He was still a moment, and I could see even in the moonlight, that wonderful dancing light come into his eyes. Then he said it.

"What would you say if I should ask you to marry me?"

All the breath in my body seemed to leave me. Couldn't he know what I would say? For just an instant it seemed as if I could not speak, even if I had always known it. There are things that you do know. Still, when they actually come, it frightens you.

Then it seemed suddenly as if something had broken like ice, and I told him everything. I am afraid it was dreadful, but he said afterwards it was beautiful, and he was glad I told him just how it was.

It began when I was a little girl. He

was such a big, splendid boy I was always dreaming about him. Why I used to watch hours from my window when he was home for his college vacations, just to see him go by.

After I quite grew up, and he came home to stay, some way he seemed to belong just to me. It did not hurt me when I saw him with other girls; that is not much, I was so sure that some time it would be all right.

It has been such a comfort, too, when things made me feel smothered and stifled, to say over and over to myself, "Molly M'Lahey, Molly M'Lahey." It sounded so free and jolly and full of sunshine. Then I didn't mind anything.

I told him it startled me, though, because I wasn't expecting it so soon. It had always seemed just "sometime" a long way off. After I had told it all to him, he was still for a minute, then he just cried out:

"Molly! Molly!" and put his hand over mine very softly. I could not help taking hold of it, it seemed to steady and help me.

"O, my dear, my dear!" he said again. "It is all right."

Then—then he drew me close to him. It frightened me a little. No one ever had cuddled me. The aunts don't believe in it, and they had particularly said I never, never was to allow a man even so much as to touch my hand. That way, you know. Then I remembered that I belonged to Dick now.

I think it is a beautiful thing to be cuddled by some one like—like—Dick.

I was sure he thought it was right, too, and he did, for he said:

"It is the rightest thing that ever happened, dear child. Surely miserable fools are some times guided by angels."

I don't know why he should have said that last, though. I will probably understand him better when I am more accustomed to him.

Another thing he said when we were coming up from the beach made me almost shiver.

He suddenly commenced to laugh.

"Holy Smoke! but won't it be a bomb to the aunts. I would rather tell them than have something left me in a will. The first time they ever let you out, too!"

That was exactly what he said. Still, it was a comfort, because I had thought of the aunts that minute myself, and it frightened me so I just stopped.

It was very dreadful here for awhile, but Dick did not seem to mind at all.

All day today, whenever grandmother has looked at me or the aunts, she has burst out laughing. I think Aunt Jane is mistaken about her growing childish, though. I believe it is because she has a disposition more like Dick's.

I Am the Emperor

BY ELEANOR M. INGRAM

Listen, father! I am fifty-five years old and ill; the fancy has come to me to tell you a story that happened twenty years ago and has never passed my lips till now.

Move your chair a little—so.

I remember quite well the first time I saw him. He stood aside to let me pass, flushing and paling like a girl and saluting with the uncertainty of embarrassment as I crossed the hall on the way to the carriage. I paused and asked his name, attracted by the boyish reverence for his sovereign in the great black eyes that met mine.

He told me, stammering over the simple answer, and I learned he was the last of an old line, only twenty-two, and fresh from the naval training school.

He pleased me strangely and I stationed him at the capital, thinking it would be pleasant to have him near me.

If I had only known—

Others might feel regret, even remorse, but am I not the emperor? With such ideas I have no concern; yet I think of him sometimes when I would rather forget.

He soon outgrew his shyness in the atmosphere of our gay court. Before long the young Count Cernief was one of the most popular men in the city. Frank, happy, of good family, with a striking dark beauty of his own, I was not the only one who liked him.

In the next three years I sent him from the capital just once. He fretted a little at the inaction, I heard, but never ventured a word of remonstrance to me. Had I not a right to keep him for my amusement; he was my subject?

But towards the end of the third year all signs of restlessness ceased abruptly.

Cernief grew abstracted and started

vaguely when anyone spoke to him. I was more amused than ever, evidently my favorite was in love.

I waited a few months for his announcement in vain, and then asked him one day who the lady was.

To my surprise he denied that he was engaged.

"Very well," I said jestingly, "then we will find you a wife, Cernief. Remember your name must not die out."

He stared at me a moment in consternation and vehemently begged me not to do so, to leave him free.

"Then there is a lady," I observed.

He replied rather incoherently that it had been a wild dream on his part, an impossibility, that he had cousins who could take the name.

I shrugged my shoulders and let the subject drop. He was a very small incident in my daily life; a plaything.

But that evening I entered the ballroom unexpectedly before the usual hour, and I saw Cernief start from the Princess Sophia's side and draw back with a swift glance in my direction.

The strangeness of the action struck me at once: there was no reason why he should not speak to her or why he should look apprehensively at me. The princess was my *fiancée*, our wedding was to take place in a few weeks, surely it was natural for my favorite officer to be with her.

I was puzzled and cast a searching glance at Cernief as we passed. His eyes fell before mine for the first time. Sophia received me with an air of nervous abstraction that completed my wonder.

I was not a youth, and I loved her, father.

From Sophia's fair lovelines, I looked

across at Cernief, dark, radiant, young. In the mirror opposite I saw a sallow figure with prematurely gray hair seated in a massive chair that dwarfed its slight proportions. The cares of empire age soon

The scene of the morning recurred to me slowly, Cernief's vague allusions to an impossible love and denial of an engagement.

I knew of no lady in the court who would not have been flattered by his attentions and yet he had spoken despairingly.

From that hour I had no doubt, but I waited until it was a certainty. The jealousy of my race is no slight thing to curb; while I watched the glances, the thousand little things that betrayed a secret understanding between them, all that I outwardly suppressed grew to a wrath within of which you can have no conception.

As yet only a boy and girl affection, I believed separation would cure Sophia, at least, and for that separation I laid my plans. Absolute power as I held, it was necessary to use caution. I did not blame Sophia much, or intend that she should ever suspect my knowledge. She was romantic and fickle like all women; the fault was Cernief's. Even he must never know what he was punished for; it did not accord with my dignity to admit I could have a rival.

When all was ready I sent for him. I laughed aloud and paced the floor impatiently as I waited, but at the sound of approaching steps I returned to my chair and resumed the mask of self-control.

Why do you tell your rosary, father, I have scarcely commenced.

I did not speak immediately, studying him as he stood before me, tall and straight in his uniform, with smiling lips and frank eyes. He never looked like that again.

One would have almost sworn that there was affection in his glance as it met mine.

But gradually his expression changed before my intent gaze. I do not imagine my face was pleasant in spite of my interior satisfaction.

"You appear agitated, Count Cernief," I said finally.

"I fear I have incurred your displeasure, sire," he answered.

For years I had called him Adrian and the formal address added to his confusion. "I am sorry to have you admit it," I replied.

He flushed.

"Pardon me, sire, I am ignorant of how. I simply inferred—"

"Your conscience failed you?" I interrupted. "While aware there is always some anarchy going on in this country, I hardly expected to find one of its disciples in Count Cernief."

I paused to watch the effect of my words.

He looked at me incredulously, slowly paling.

"You do well not to deny it," I continued coldly, "I have proof that cannot be contradicted."

"But I do deny it, sire," he cried. "It is not true. Your majesty jests, there can be no proof."

"One of your accomplices has confessed," I returned unmoved.

"My accomplices! I have no accomplices!" he exclaimed indignantly. "Sire, you cannot mean this. I, who have been at your side so long, who owe you so much, I plot against your majesty. It is horrible!"

"It is indeed," I answered.

He shrank from my tone as if I had struck him.

"I agree that all this makes it worse," I went on, "and am surprised that you recall it to me. I assure you it is not necessary. For the sake of the name you bear I will not disgrace you publicly, but privately—" again I paused to enjoy his white dazed face. "You are under arrest, Count Cernief."

He uttered a sharp exclamation and sank on his knee at my feet.

"Sire, it is not true!" he cried fiercely, his clear voice ringing through the room. "On my honor as a gentleman, on my faith as a Christian, it is not true. I am loyal to you in heart and deed. I an anarchist! Will some enemy's sword outweigh my whole course of life? Will you not believe me, sire?"

"No," I answered and pulled the bell.

He hid his face in his hands and I looked down in silence at the bent dark head.

The tramp of approaching men aroused

us both. He rose slowly and unbuckling his sword laid it on the table at my side.

The officer who entered had already received his orders and Cernief offered no resistance. But before he left the room he looked at me once more with an expression so earnest in its despairing truth that my heart almost failed me. Then the recollection of how much greater his real crime was than the one of which he was falsely accused came to restore my firmness. He deserved all I could do; did it matter under what name I punished him?

That evening I ordered the *Novgorodo* on a long cruise to the tropics, and let it be supposed that Cernief had sailed with her. It was not my intention to give Sophia cause to pity him; a woman can be more constant in pity than in love.

A week passed; Sophia appeared preoccupied and thoughtful. I lost all sympathy for my prisoner, if indeed I had ever felt it.

At the end of the week I summoned him before me again.

This time he leaned on his guard's arm as he entered. Heavy dark circles lay under the black eyes and his lips were set in a straight line that told me much.

I surveyed him a moment and waited. I wanted to see him at my feet, to hear him ask so that I might refuse, to have the right to despise as well as hate him.

But he stood motionless after the first salute, not even looking at me.

"Have you anything to say," I asked at last.

"Your majesty sent for me," he answered, "I can say nothing but what I said before."

"I have reconsidered our last interview," I said reflectively. "You are not without hope."

He started and raised his eyes eagerly.

"You believe me, sire," he demanded, scarcely breathing.

I smiled internally, there was still a way to move him.

"Certainly not, Count Cernief. I have merely decided to give you the opportunity of confessing and purchasing a lighter sentence by telling the names of your associates."

As I expected, he winced visibly before the disappointment.

"I cannot confess what I did not do," he answered, "and if I were guilty I would not sell my comrades."

"A most wise and respectful reply," I said sarcastically. "You will return to your prison, then."

He bowed and put his hand on the arm of the man at his side, he, the pride of his corps for grace and strength.

"You suffer, perhaps," I inquired.

He looked me full in the eyes and then I realized the wonderful change in him. His youth was dead, a bitter, insulted man looked out at me.

"What was done, undoubtedly was done at your majesty's orders," he said evenly. "You might have had me shot, sire."

Father, that reproach went home. I might have had him shot, and he would not have troubled me again. But I wanted to make him suffer, I wanted revenge.

After all, what right had he to ask swift oblivion; I had to live and know my promised wife did not love me.

A day or two after I met one of Sophia's ladies in the hall. Ordinarily I did not pay much attention to them, but this one gazed at me so wistfully that involuntarily I stopped and spoke to her.

She was a slender girl with golden-brown hair and grave brown eyes, curiously sad for one so young. She answered my trivial remark with gentle dignity and hesitated. I waited quietly, and seeing my comprehension of her wish she took courage.

"If I might ask, sire—" she commenced uncertainly, then in a little rush, "Count Cernief is really gone?"

An exclamation of rage and astonishment broke from me.

"Go bid your mistress ask herself," I said fiercely, and pushing her roughly aside I strode on, blind with anger.

Think, father: I, the emperor, was to be the toy of a silly girl. That Sophia should dare so much and try to deceive me with a childish artifice.

For I knew she did not love Cernief really any more than she loved me; she was not capable of it. It was simply her last caprice, and her persistence in it astounded me. Evidently his dark beauty had made

a deeper impression on her than I supposed. Jealousy shook me like a storm, and stopping at the nearest table that held pen and ink I wrote an order to the officer who had Cernief in charge. The pen quivered in my unsteady fingers, and I sealed the letter with my ring lest my writing should not be recognized. Since I could not strike Sophia, Cernief must suffer for both.

It is whispered that insanity runs in our house; if it were true, I could not have gone on and conducted the daily routine of business so calmly that morning.

I mentally anathematized the fit of passion that had made me expose myself to the young girl Sophia had sent. The recollection of her terrified face annoyed me. If she repeated my message, as she probably would, what effect would it have on Sophia?

On my way to luncheon I called the officer in charge and ordered him to bring Cernief to my room. He answered that it should be done if I wished, but the prisoner was unconscious.

I dismissed him impatiently, although it was to be expected. The picture rose before me of his rigid face on the narrow prison cot, and I enjoyed my lunch.

In the afternoon I paid my usual visit to Sophia. She received me with a sweet serenity that filled me with mingled wrath and amazement.

Either the girl had not understood me or my *fiancée* was an inimitable actress. Being cousins, I thought I knew something of her character, but this phase puzzled me.

On returning to the palace I was informed that Cernief was delirious. The officer was apologetic but helpless. The impulse seized me to go myself and see him off his guard, without the mask his pride kept between us. It would be easily done, for he was not confined in the prison, but in a distant part of the palace itself. I signified my desire to the waiting officer.

Our way led downward through a succession of passages and stairs until the daylight was almost lost. That gloom must have affected Cernief strangely the first day he was taken there.

We stopped before a heavily barred door

which opened with some difficulty. On the threshold I left the others and entered alone.

He lay very much as I had fancied him on the miserable bed, his wide open eyes blazing with fever, a scarlet spot on each thin cheek, but, an exasperated hatred rose in me as I looked, the beauty I longed to destroy was with him still.

He was speaking swiftly and incoherently, disconnected meaningless sentences following each other. I gathered that he was thinking of the training-ship he had left five years before. Finally he was silent for a moment, moving his head restlessly from side to side.

"Princess," he murmured vaguely, "help me; it is you—" then in an indescribable tone and accent, "Dear love, dear love."

Furious, I took a step forward and struck the smiling lips with my clenched hand. He shuddered and lay motionless.

I left the room with a solemn promise to myself that I would not see him again until I had found the punishment suited to his crime. And I kept my word.

Father, you are pale; remember it happened twenty years ago.

A month elapsed without further incident. It was impossible to do anything until Cernief gained sufficient strength to realize what was taking place around him. Sophia continued calmly making her preparations for our wedding. She appeared perfectly contented and happy. I watched her sometimes with positive dislike, as I thought what her last whim had cost, knowing she would forget me quite as easily.

The lady with her I had met constantly; her name was Allia Souvarov, I learned. Sophia was apparently very fond of her and never showed the slightest embarrassment having me see them together. I was forced to the conclusion that Made-moiselle Souvarov had been too frightened to repeat my message, perhaps had not comprehended it.

Two or three days before our wedding I found Sophia with an atlas on her table, poring over it diligently. She made no attempt to conceal it, but rose to receive me with unruffled composure.

I offered no comment, but in spite of myself my eyes turned more than once to the open book during the half hour that followed. Finally she caught the direction of my glance and flashed an inquiring smile at me.

"My sudden taste for geography surprises you, sire? We ladies must pass the time somehow. Apropos of the Indian Ocean, is Count Cernief to return soon?"

The audacity stung me past all caution.

"Count Cernief is dead," I retorted brutally.

Sophia's blue eyes opened wonderingly. Without a word or cry the girl at her side swayed and fell, the golden-brown hair slipping its bonds and covering her like a cloak. Sophia cried out sharply and knelt by her hysterically.

"Allia, Allia," she said in tears, "a doctor! Let someone bring a doctor. We have killed her, sire. Oh, will no one help—"

In an instant the room was filled with people. The girl was lifted tenderly to a couch in the next room and a bevy of women surrounded Sophia with smelling-salts and glasses of water. But I was in no mood for trifling and brushed them sternly aside.

"I wish to speak to you," I said to her.

The hint was enough; they huddled from the room with terrified glances at my face.

"Now," I said when we were alone, "what does this mean?"

"It is all my fault," Sophia answered, putting her handkerchief to her eyes. "Of course I never imagined anything had happened to poor Adrian, or I would not have spoken before Allia. They are engaged; that is, they would be if it were not for Baron Souvarov. You know, sire, he is determined that Allia shall enter a convent, and she is too timid to oppose him. Even after admitting she loved Cernief she refused to let him take any steps to set her free. He begged her to let him tell you, knowing a single word from you to her father would be enough, but she was afraid. I think she would have yielded if Adrian had not been ordered away just then. After that she was in despair, for by the time he returned it would be too late. I

had almost decided to interfere myself, sire, and ask you to help them. Allia was always delicate and she loved him so much. What happened to him, sire? Surely some accident; he was so strong and well."

"Yes, an accident," I answered slowly.

There was a sudden movement in the room beyond and the doctor appeared between the curtains.

"She is better?" Sophia cried eagerly.

He looked at me and hesitated.

"Mademoiselle Souvarov suffered with a weak heart, your royal highness, and the shock—"

"She is dead?" I demanded.

He bowed.

"Death was almost instantaneous, your majesty."

It is my impression that Sophia screamed; I turned and left the room.

"The palace," I flung to the orderly as I stepped into the carriage.

Those we met stared and made way in consternation. Snowy streets and brilliant crowds passed before me in a kaleidoscopic whirl of color. As we turned into the avenue a group of soldiers halted and came to a salute. In their midst was a prisoner heavily chained who languidly raised his head and gazed at me out of sad dark eyes. Only a peasant he was, but I caught my breath and stopped the carriage.

"Where are you taking this man," I asked the officer.

"Your majesty, he has been sentenced to the knout—" he began.

"Set him free," I interrupted curtly and sank back on the cushions.

Once in the palace, I paused. I wished to see Cernief myself, but not in the room where he had stood two months before looking at me with those clear untroubled eyes. Rather, where darkness would shield my expression and help me guard my dignity. After a moment's consideration I called my guide and descended again the long cold passages.

The door to his cell opened more easily than before; so noiselessly, in fact, that I stood in the room a little while before he perceived my presence.

He rose slowly, regarding me fixedly. I think at first he mistook me for one of the

shapes with which delirium must have often peopled his cell.

And looking at him, crippled, helpless, his pride ground to the dust, the woman he loved dead, I offered the only reparation in my power.

"Count Cernief," I said, in a voice the cold steadiness of which was better than I had expected, "I have decided that it is useless to await any information from you. Your sentence of death will be carried out."

A sudden light flashed into the thin face. "Soon, sire," he asked eagerly, "and—

"And how?" I knew was on his lips.

"You will be shot in half an hour," I said.

"With an effort he drew himself erect and saluted with almost his old-time grace.

"I thank you, sire," he said, and smiled into my eyes.

What is this, father, tears? I think you forget it was twenty years ago.

Trimming An Infant

BY CAMPBELL MAC CULLOCH

"You're a nice handy youth to have about the house, Larry, and I'm not sayin' you don't know th' graftin' business, too, but when it gets right down to th' bed-rock business of takin' th' coin away artistic, you don't happen with your Uncle Dudley, and that's no pipedream neither."

And "Pop" Simpson, as he was generally known in the under-world of "easy-money," sat back in his chair and let his philanthropic double chin flow down easily over his collar, while his sharp gray eye noted approvingly the petulant flush that came over the young man he addressed as Larry. In his own proper person this individual was known as Mr. James Forsyth Kingsley, and those who were more intimate with him knew that he was an offshoot of a decent enough family back in Ohio; that he was a graduate of Princeton, and that he liked good clothes and the society of gentlemen, when these did not interfere with his pursuit of the elusive dollar. Mr. Forsyth, however, had found it convenient to drop his patronymic for the less obtrusive one of Larry Winters, owing to a prying particularity on the part of certain rude police who made it their business to delve altogether too rudely into the various transactions that had brought him under their notice. He had travelled extensively about the country, and had even made a trip or two to Europe in the pursuit of further knowledge of his craft, and all in all had a very fair working knowledge of the *modus operandi* of

separating estimable, but avaricious gentlemen from their hard-earned money. All this, of course, is by the way, and so we return once more to Mr. Simpson's arraignment of his companion's capacity.

"Not that I'm sayin' you ain't smooth, my boy," pursued the estimable one. "But I do holler it right out here in meetin' that you've got a long ways to travel before you get onto all the fine points. You held up your end in that little deal we pulled off with that young sucker some time back, when we got him to back a phoney book, but you'll admit you did try to flim me at the last minute. But when it comes to wire-tappin', you're a baby from Brooklyn, and that's about the innocentest thing I can lay my mind to off the bat."

Mr. Simpson comfortably reached out for another cigar, bit the end from it calmly, and applied the remainder of his previous weed to it. Then he placed his feet on the rocking chair before him, and proceeded to go further into the business that occupied him. He was cherubic in appearance, was Mr. Simpson, but a world of guile lay beneath his calm exterior. Compared to him the unsounded depths of the Pacific ocean were but as a shallow pool, and if there was a trick that had been by him unlearned, he knew nothing of it.

"Over here at the St. Regis," pursued Mr. Simpson pleasantly, "I've got planted as juicy a fall guy for a neat bit of wire tappin' as you'll come across in a day's

walk. He's ripe and he's ready to fall off the tree at any minute. I could work him along alone, but I need you to make the front. I'm not swellin' you any Larry when I say you've got the air and the manner of wearin' clothes and lookin' like they belonged to you, which I ain't got and never will have, on account of me bein' raised in the coal passin' trade aboard an ocean tramp, and it's there that you come in. It's up to you to hop over there, do the swell thing, and get acquainted with this pigeon. He's got the coin and he's crazy

around the big hotels, where they're wastin' their time standin' in with th' cashier and pullin' down a small rake-off from the restaurant? I'm wise to most of these E. Z. Marks that come waftin' in here with th' autumn breezes, my boy, and don't let that escape you."

Mr. Kingsley lighted a gold monogrammed cigaret, helped himself to a high ball, and lay back in his chair on the other side of the table. His acquaintance with Mr. Simpson had been extensive enough to warrant the knowledge that that wily



DRAWN BY HOWARD V. BROWN

His double chin flowed down over his collar.

to make some more, and we'll hand him a new line of wire business quick and hot and make a get away before he knows just how he's been stung."

"Where did your estimable acquaintance pick up his bundle?" inquired Mr. Kingsley bluntly. "And where did you get hep to him and his ambitions?"

"My boy, I've got pipe lines laid that'd give John D. a cold shiver if he heard of 'em, and make him lose even the last few remainin' hairs in his top piece. Where did I get hep? What d'ye suppose I read the daily papers for? Why am I keepin' an expensive stable of hired help scattered

individual had strings to his bow that he knew nothing of, and that these strings generally landed a heavy fish. Therefore, he waited patiently for further information.

"As I was sayin', I want you to go over to th' Regis and take a couple of rooms. Then it's up to you to get acquainted. Don't be stingy about your drinks, and drop around to Grogan's once every day and I'll tell you what's comin' off, and when it's comin'. I've got to organize a young Western Union all by my lonesome, and it's goin' to take some tall hustlin' to do it. I'm goin' out after Jim Collins first, because he's an old time operator and

knows most of the gang here in town. It's goin' to be a neat job, if I do say it myself, Larry."

Mr. Kingsley sighed impatiently and frowned. His was an alert face, and one that would fly into action if a stranger should suddenly address him by his proper name, but he was a nice looking young fellow and had spent some months in gaining the accidments of graft as it appears on the surface. Because he had travelled a whole season with a ciruus outfit and had put in a few months with a medicine show, he felt he was competent to tackle any of the lines of big graft, as it is handled in the cities. It was the province of the more mature Mr. Simpson to show him how greatly he erred in these premises. Mr. Kingsley observed rather truculently:

"It looks simple enough to me. All you do is to fix up a room with some phoney instruments, put in an operator who has just been discharged from the telegraph company, make a bluff about tapping the wires, and land your man. What's the use of all this fuss and feathers about it, Sim? I'm no chicken."

Mr. Simpson gazed at him with a kindly, though somewhat sorrowful eye, in which was blended much pathos and considerable grim humor.

"I almost get sore at you at times, Larry," he remarked. "You poor, benighted lump of dope, you. Don't you know that that old game petered out fifteen years ago? Ain't you travelled enough with me to know that there ain't a sucker in th' country that'd fall for a bum plant like that? At times, I'm almost tempted to take your money myself so as to prevent you losin' it."

"Well, what's your game then?" replied Larry grumpily. "Why don't you loosen up and put me wise? You're not Archibald-the-whole-works, you know."

With a solemn shake of the head Mr. Simpson filled himself a modest glass from the decanter at his elbow and gazed pityingly upon his companion.

"You listen here, young man," he said, "and maybe you'll know more. To begin with, there ain't an instrument used in this game, and there ain't no room, neither. Wire tappin', accordin' to th' Simpson method, ain't got no wires, nor no need of

any either. All it uses is brains and a quick mind, with a chap like you to make the front and stall. I've got the first two, and you do what's left. Now, this here's th' game. You do what I tell you, and when you get your man where you can lead him around with a string, I'll tell you what's next. Now, you'd better pack up a couple of trunks and light into the St. Regis in the mornin'. You go up there in a Pennsylvanla cab and register from Philadelphia, and use any name that sounds good, only be sure and have something like Biddle in it somewhere. There's nothin' but Biddles in Philly, so you ain't likely to get called. You come around to my place tomorrow night and tell me how your game's goin'."

With one or two minor preparations Mr. Simpson was ready for his journey home, and repeated his injunctions to make all the front that could be handled without straining the gentle breeding Mr. Kingsley was to portray.

It was nearly five o'clock the next afternoon when a neatly appointed hansom deposited Mr. Kingsley, immaculately groomed, at the door of the modest apartment house where Mr. Simpson held forth under an alias designed to disguise the personality of the man the police had knowledge of.

"How's it going?" was the laconic greeting of Mr. Simpson.

"Going easy," replied young Mr. Kingsley. "He's a cinch for me. I've had him all afternoon; beat him a couple of games of pool; talked about polo in Philly, and led him up to racing at Sheepshead. He says he likes to see the ponies run, but hasn't got the fever yet. We're going down there tomorrow, and I'm going to feel him out. I'm going to place a few phoney bets of a couple of hundred—not—and show him a bank roll won from the longest shot on the card."

"You go right along on that line, my son," commented Mr. Simpson. "Get him worked up as usual, and then I'll give you a place where we'll pull down his roll so fast that he'll get a dose of pneumonia."

Mr. Kingsley strolled out to his hansom again and sat in a bored manner as it rolled through the park. At the hotel he sought



DRAWN BY HOWARD V. BROWN

"That's my father; I thought he was in Philly."

out his intended victim and invited him to dine. From that moment on, the pigeon was as good as plucked. In the meanwhile Mr. Simpson had not been idle, for he had organized a little plan according to the Simpson cult in such matters. Three days later, when Mr. Kingsley, still bored but rather anxious beneath it, put in an appearance, he explained at length to him, just how the matter was to culminate. Kingsley was to hint, very gently of course, that he had met a man who had pointed out to him the fallacy of working for a living when money could be made from the poolrooms with so much ease. He was to have some considerable doubt about the legitimacy of the proceeding, because of the things he had read in the newspapers of those vicious wire tapping raids, and he was to ask his friend for advice. This was the first step. Later on he was to express a belief in the feasibility of the scheme, and in order that he might have moral support—Mr. Simpson was especially keen on the moral support—he was to invite his friend, who by the way bore the peculiarly appropriate name of Jenkins, to go with him and see how it turned out. Young Mr. Kingsley was to evince hesitancy and doubt while in the presence of Mr. Simpson, who was then to appoint a meeting place within easy distance of the main office of the telegraph company for the next day, when the details of the plot would be laid bare.

Here Mr. Simpson interposed a rider to the effect that it would be a consummate outrage to permit a man with the name of Jenkins to escape without paying due tribute. The next day, at the meeting place, Mr. Simpson was to explain the scheme at greater length, and Mr. Kingsley was to accept it and place his money. An hour later he was to reap large rewards and thus incite the avarice of Mr. Jenkins.

"What you don't want to forget," said Mr. Simpson at parting, "is to remember that you first knew me when I was doin' some professional polo work out at Bryn Mawr. That's how you and me met up. Then you want to be high and mighty and let it out that your good old daddy has kind of put a crimp into your bank allowance on account of some doin's you had with a young woman over this way; and

then kind of hint around that diamonds come high these days. I'm an artist at this game, Larry, and you don't want to forget it, and all the local color, as them artist fellows say, has got to be in this."

Late that night Mr. Kingsley sat with young Mr. Jenkins over a quart at one of Sherry's tables, and to him he unfolded his tale. When he reached the point of the curtailment of the allowance, he waxed positively eloquent:

"I ask you, Jenkins, as a man of the world," he said, "what's a chap to do with a beastly hundred a week in this town? It's rank idiocy to expect him to live on it. Why, hang it, man, my flower bill comes to that, and I haven't begun to think of suppers, and things, and my hotel bill's in the dim future. Fathers have a foolish idea that all a chap has to do is to moon around and behave. I'm so deep in the hole that I'm going to take a hack at a proposition that was made me today."

And here in all its pristine coloring was unfolded the fertile genius of the astute Mr. Simpson. With each sentence the eyes of Mr. Jenkins grew larger, and yet larger, and when the invitation was extended to him to accompany Larry, he fairly fell over the table in his eagerness to accept. It was almost a shame, Mr. Kingsley reflected, to take this money. It so greatly resembled the robbery of an infant in a perambulator. However, one must live. And then there was considerable satisfaction in thinking of the ease that Jenkins' money would bring. He had an ample sufficiency of it, this Mr. Kingsley had taken the care to ascertain, and he had intimated there was plenty more where this came from.

Just here, however, the Fates, those scurvy damsels, decided to play young Mr. Kingsley a mean trick. At another table some twenty feet away was seated a pleasant appearing gentleman who gazed with reminiscent candor at Mr. Kingsley's back, and evinced considerable interest in his doings. This gentleman was tall, quite distinguished in appearance, had a sharp pair of steel gray eyes, and a carefully trimmed grayish mustache. Over his face, at intervals, there shot a twinkle of amusement, and a waiter at whom he glanced, was seized with such tremors that



DRAWN BY HOWARD V. BROWN

"You see it's this way."

he dropped a tray and was hustled out of the dining room by an indignant and outraged head waiter. About the time Mr. Kingsley had completed his story of the things to be done, this pleasant gentleman arose and sauntered easily to the table at which Jenkins and his mentor were seated. Arrived there, he glanced at Mr. Kingsley with a gentle smile, and then laid a fatherly hand upon his shoulder. To the astonished Jenkins, the good gentleman quietly observed:

"I don't know you, young man, but if you have any money I'd advise you strongly to lock it up until you have seen the last of my young friend Larry, here. He's a curious young fellow, and he doesn't always seem to regard proprietary rights as binding."

With another amused glance, the handsome individual strolled easily out of the room. Young Mr. Kingsley was never before accused of having nerves, but from the way he looked, and from the eager haste with which he deftly inserted a highball into his department of the interior, he was perturbed, at least. Jenkins glanced at him with a questioning look and said:

"Who's your friend? What was he driving at?"

It must be confessed that Mr. Kingsley could not be put out with but one punch, so after a struggle of a second or two, he mastered his indignation and said with fervid heat:

"Interfering old fool. That's my dad. I thought he was safe in Philadelphia, but he's evidently over here for something or other. You see what a chance I have to get anything out of him."

"He's young looking, now, isn't he?" commented Mr. Jenkins.

"Oh, he looks young enough," complained Kingsley, "but he's over seven, all right."

Could this conversation have been overheard by the gentleman referred to thus cavalierly, he would have been astonished; and the thought that Inspector Laughlin, of the New York police, was thus forced to stand paternity to a young man of Mr. Kingsley's caliber would doubtless have slightly offended him. However, he knew nothing of it, and had contented himself

with the friendly warning, and thus once more was the young man permitted to snap his fingers at fate.

Cleverly using this incident as a lever, Mr. Kingsley managed to inculcate some good homilies into his companion, chief among which was that beginning: "Faint heart, etc." When they parted at the hotel, Jenkins was pledged to accompany his whilom acquaintance to the rendezvous on the morrow and see him remove from the purse-proud bookmakers many glittering shekels.

At two in the afternoon of the following day, the pair were seated in one of the large downtown hotels, and to them came the venerable and childlike Simpson, who greeted Kingsley with ultra respect and expressed considerable astonishment at the presence of his friend, Mr. Jenkins.

"I don't take this at all kind of you, Mr. Biddle," said the wily one. "You know I've got to be mighty careful on account of my friend, who's manager of the telegraph company, for if anything about this was to get out, it would mean hard times for him."

"He's all right, Simpson. I give you my word of honor on that. You see, you were always a queer old cuss, and I thought it just as well to have someone along, because I don't forget how you did me once on that feed bill when you had my ponies over at Bryn Mawr," said young Mr. Kingsley with an air.

"Well, sir," said Simpson, "of course, if you say he's all right, why all right he is, but I'd have preferred you to be alone."

"Perhaps to save trouble I'd better trot along and leave you to finish your business by yourselves," observed the guileless Jenkins.

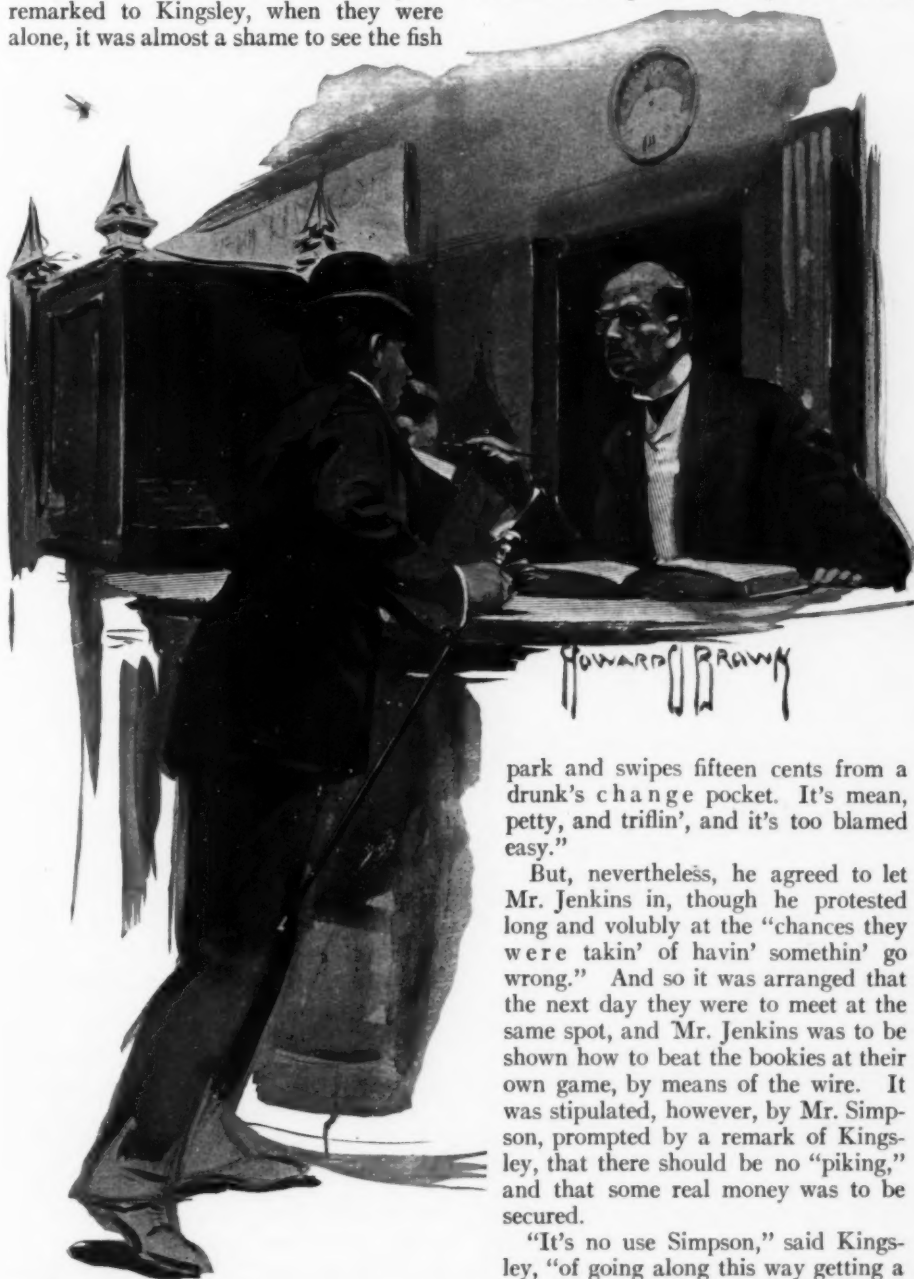
"Not for a minute," hastily interposed Mr. Kingsley. "Not for a single minute. Simpson, here, knows me, and knows my word's as good as his bond," which after all was not saying so very much for that doubtful article, and Simpson hurriedly agreed, with the result that the ruffled Jenkins agreed to remain.

It is hardly necessary to go into the details of the preliminaries by which, during the afternoon, young Mr. Kingsley was enabled to raise a very modest \$500 into some-

thing like \$7,500, but it was successful, inasmuch as Jenkins begged, pleaded, and almost wept to be permitted to go into it on his own account. As Simpson remarked to Kingsley, when they were alone, it was almost a shame to see the fish

bite so easily, as it destroyed almost his entire interest in the pursuit.

"I feel, Larry," he observed, "like one of them mean pikers that lays around the



DRAWN BY HOWARD V. BROWN

He whispered the magic word "Gaites."

park and swipes fifteen cents from a drunk's change pocket. It's mean, petty, and triffin', and it's too blamed easy."

But, nevertheless, he agreed to let Mr. Jenkins in, though he protested long and volubly at the "chances they were takin' of havin' somethin' go wrong." And so it was arranged that the next day they were to meet at the same spot, and Mr. Jenkins was to be shown how to beat the bookies at their own game, by means of the wire. It was stipulated, however, by Mr. Simpson, prompted by a remark of Kingsley, that there should be no "piking," and that some real money was to be secured.

"It's no use Simpson," said Kingsley, "of going along this way getting a few paltry hundreds. Let's come down tomorrow with a good bankroll and get

after it strong. I can put my hands on about \$3,000 and with that we ought to turn over something worth while."

Mr. Jenkins was fired with a laudable ambition to go him even better than this.

"I've got five thousand up here in a deposit vault," he said. "I'll bring that and we'll see what I can do. I can't tell you how much obliged I am at you two fellows letting me in on this."

"Don't mention it," said Kingsley with a lordly air.

"It's all right, sir," observed the ancient beguiler. "I'm more than glad to oblige any friend of Mr. Biddle's."

It's almost sinful to set forth in detail what occurred the next day, but the last sad details must be gone through with. Both young men appeared at the meeting place with their money. There they met the astute one, and by him were favored with a plan of the day's doings.

"Mr. Biddle I know and have known, and he knows me," he began, "but you, Mr. Jenkins, can't be expected to have confidence in me unless I deserve it. I've gone to a deal of trouble to get this here little thing workin' right, and I'm goin' to show you that I'm on th' level. I want you to come across the street and meet up with my man. I won't tell you his name, because that ain't professional, but I'm goin' to introduce him as Smith. You're on."

Mr. Jenkins hastened to assure him that this was not at all necessary, but Simpson was set on his plan.

"You see, it's this way," he went on. "I've got my pal over here, and we've fixed it up that he's to lay back for th' races as they come through his office, and then after takin' off the winner and the place and third chances, is to write them names on a bit of paper and send a messenger across with it to me. I'm to hike out for th' pool room and place the money, and then I give him th' tip and we go around after he's sent the races along, and pull down the cash."

"How simple," observed Mr. Jenkins with a glitter of avarice in his mild blue eye.

"Yes, ain't it?" said Mr. Simpson, with, it is to be feared, a double meaning, which

may be taken to have included Mr. Jenkins. "It's took me nigh on to three months to get it workin', though. You see, this pal o' mine across th' street can't afford to take all kinds o' chances."

The process worked to perfection for the first race, though, as they observed to Mr. Jenkins, they would start in with a modest ten dollar bet, so as not to alarm the pool room, and to test the working of the plan for the day. They handed Mr. Jenkins \$100 for his ten, and he was correspondingly elated. His horse, he had been informed, was quoted at 9 to 1. Then came preparations for the event. Mindful of his promise, Simpson took them both across the way to the telegraph office and stood just outside the door, after looking in for a moment. Almost immediately a mustached gentleman in his shirt sleeves joined them, was introduced with a wink under the patronymic of Smith, and then dashed back again. The three then returned to the hotel. Within five minutes a messenger boy handed Simpson an envelope, and on it were marked several names of horses. The genial Simpson grew quite excited.

"Here's where we place the whole bundle, boys," he whispered, "and clean up a good big wad. I know the favorite here, Escalader, will be 2 to 1 or better. Quick with the cash."

Jenkins placed his collateral in the genial person's hands and was followed by Mr. Kingsley, who took occasion to remark:

"Be careful, Sim. No slip up, now."

Then Mr. Simpson disappeared returning again almost immediately rubbing his hands.

"My word, you were quick," observed young Mr. Jenkins. "The place can't be very far from here, can it?"

Simpson chuckled inwardly and bending over whispered:

"I'll tell you a secret, sir, and don't you ever breathe it. The room's right here in this hotel. The proprietor runs it himself, and he only takes swell bets. But he's in with the police, and there's really no secret about it. Of course, he uses care, and he don't let anyone in without th' signal. That's changed every day. Now today, all you've got to do is to lean over to the

clerk out there and whisper: 'Gaites,' an' he'll call a bell hop and you go right up."

"By Jove, that's simple, is'nt it?" commented Mr. Jenkins, wonderingly.

After some ten minutes had slipped by, Simpson arose with a sigh and said:

"I guess Smith's sent along the winners by this time. I'll run up and cash in," and he went forth. Young Mr. Kingsley sat idly smoking until he leaped to his feet.

"Oh, Fred," he called with some excitement and gazed at the lobby. Then he turned to Jenkins. "Wait for me a minute like a good chap, will you. Just saw a friend I've been looking for. Tell Sim, I'll be right back." And he ran out to the lobby and turned the corner.

Ten minutes passed and neither man returned. The ten grew into twenty and still there was no sign of his friends. Jenkins squirmed uneasily and got up and peered into the lobby. The twenty grew in time to an hour, and poor Jenkins began to perspire freely. When another half hour had gone by he had a brilliant thought. He would look in the poolroom for the venerable Simpson. Approaching the clerk, he bent over and whispered the magic word, "Gaites," but that individual stared at him.

"Not stopping here," he snapped laconically.

"I mean the pool room, you know," whispered Mr. Jenkins.

"Pool room? You're crazy," said the indignant clerk.

"Indeed, no. My friend has just gone up there."

"Hey, Tom," called the clerk to a porter. "Let this daffy guy out on the street. He's gone for good."

It is sad to chronicle what then occurred. Maddened by the apparent ignorance of the clerk, Jenkins fought and bit and scratched and was tossed out onto Broadway in a dishevelled state with staring eyes and bleeding nose. He was catapulted into the waistcoat of a gentleman, who seized him by the collar, and then looked at the grinning porters on the hotel steps. But Jenkins had seen his face and with a cry seized him by the coat.

"Oh, Mr. Biddle," he shrieked, "can you get me into the poolroom? Your son and myself placed a big bet there, and now the clerk won't let me go up."

"My son," gasped the electrified gentleman, and then his face broke out into a smile of pity. "My boy, why didn't you take my tip the other night?"

"But Mr. Biddle—"

"Did he have the nerve?" smiled the handsome man. "Well, I'll give him credit for that. I happen to be Inspector Laughlin, though. Come on over here and tell me all about it."

And he led away the hapless Jenkins as tenderly as if he'd been run over by a trolley car, speaking soothing words to him, and drawing forth the sad tale with the gentleness of a woman.

The Advantage of a Safe-Guard

BY THEODORE J. GRAYSON

The day after we organized I called upon Suzanne.

She came through the dark red portieres of the drawing room a fascinating figure gowned in old rose.

I advanced to meet her.

Somehow the touch of her delicate hand gave me a more than usually pleasurable sensation. Well I was glad of that; I had nothing to fear now.

"You are late, Mr. Illwell," pouted Suzanne.

"It does seem a long time since I last saw you," I replied.

Suzanne dimpled. "Yesterday at five."

"So much has happened since then," I mused.

"Oh! Mr. Illwell what?" Suzanne's question marks are worth traveling leagues to hear.

"Guess," said I.

"Can't," said she.

"Try!" I pleaded.

"If you intend being irritating I am going away," and Suzanne sat down daintily by the tea table.

"Did you and your mother win your foursome today?" I inquired pleasantly.

"I'll wager it's Lucile Netherton!" The answer seemed irrelevant; I pondered.

"Is it?"

"It can't be."

"Provoking man; who then?"

"Under the articles of our association never anyone, now, or in the glimmering future."

"What are you talking about?"

"I have been trying to tell you, but you—"

"Oh! Mr. Illwell," Suzanne's blonde head nodded vigorous reproach.

I marshaled my forces for the announcement. "Briefly, Miss Kirby," I said, with dignity, "I have joined a Perpetual Bachelor's Club!"

Suzanne, busy tea making, looked up and laughed jocosely. "Why, how perfectly delicious!" said she.

I smoothed my hat a little sulkily; frankly, I was surprised. "If I could see—" I muttered.

"Yes?" bubbled Suzanne.

"Your point of view," I concluded.

"Why it's perfectly obvious."

"When pointed out?"

"No, stupid! shall I drive it in?"

"A little forcing," I suggested, "might do no harm."

"Well, I've been afraid—"

"Really!"

"That you would fall in love with me."

"No danger," I hastened to assure her.

Suzanne's big blue eyes opened wide.

"Lemon, isn't it?" was what she said.

"Thanks, yes."

We sipped our tea.

"Mr. Illwell—"

"Miss Kirby?"

"Why is there—no danger?"

"I've done it already—my chronic state—sort of disease."

"Silly! it's never become virulent, and I thought—"

"Yes."

"That it might."

I began to see Suzanne's point of view. "Doubtless you are relieved," I said somewhat stiffly.

"Of course," she replied, frankly extending her hand, "for we can be such friends, now that there is no danger of sentimental complications."

I took that hand a trifle gingerly; it suggested an analogy. Concerning cocktails I know my limit.

"Yes," I said warmly, "our friendship will be ideal."

"And we shall be so much freer," continued Suzanne. "You may come to see me every day."

I brightened visibly.

"And when I really don't want to see anyone, which happens oftentimes, I'll send you away."

"The privilege of friendship?" I queried, trying to conceal my feelings.

"Exactly."

"But don't you think," said I, "that as a friend you will want to see me more than as a possible lover?"

Suzanne paused, tea cup in air. "Won't it be fun finding out?" she responded.

"Perhaps—for you," I said, but Suzanne didn't hear "for you."

"And then," she went on, munching pound-cake as she spoke, "I may talk to you as a sister and help you. For instance, to begin now, your tie gives me the creeps every time I look at it."

Involuntarily I stiffened; that tie was a special favorite of mine.

"Thanks," I said dryly; "and if I might be permitted a brotherly remark, it doesn't improve your appearance to talk when your mouth is full."

Suzanne swallowed hurriedly.

"Don't choke yourself," I begged of her.

"Mr. Illwell, you are rude!"

"Merely brotherly."

"Well, you're a very rude brother."

"Not at all."

"You are!"

"Don't let us quarrel," said I, "we are to be such friends."

"Yes," said Suzanne appeased, "and I shall confide in you."

"I am honored."

"I've been wanting to for a long time; you know Freddy Langdon?"

"I have that misfortune," I said coldly.

"Oh! but you mustn't say that. You see—for a long time—it was last summer—in a canoe—it was moonlight—and I—and he—we—"

Suzanne had not spoken lucidly, and it took her quite a while. I had arisen and was pacing the room. "Well," I interjected, with an impatience which I fear was ill-bred, "what about you, and he, and we? What did he do, what did he say; can't you tell me?"

"I never will, if you speak to me like that." Suzanne's lip trembled and the blue eyes filled.

"I ask your pardon," I said with studied politeness. I picked up my stick and moved towards the door.

"Where are you going?" questioned Suzanne.

"I don't know," I rejoined gloomily.

"But I want to tell you all about Freddy!"

My jaw squared and I spoke precisely. "I never wish to hear his name again."

"I thought you were my friend," said Suzanne reproachfully.

At this point I exploded. "I'm not!" I cried and I stalked through the portieres.

"Mr. Illwell!"

I paid no attention.

"Tom!"

I returned in a very provisional manner.

"Have you anything further to say to me?"

"Of course; come here!"

In a moment I was beside her looking down into the most tantalizing eyes in the world. I held myself on the curb. Suzanne smiled innocently upward.

"Whisper!" she said, catching my lapel. I bent stiffly, feeling in every nerve her nearness, her charm.

"I told Freddy," she murmured, her perfect lips close to my ear, "that—that I couldn't—you know."

I was pretty dizzy for a second, but I stopped further conversation on Suzanne's part, and my arms didn't allow her much motion.

"Oh! Tom," she cried, struggling daintily, "you awful traitor!"

"Darling, do you really care!" I was overcome with wonder.

"But your association?" she evaded, making a long face.

"Oh! that," I exclaimed, kissing her joyously, "that doesn't signify."

"I never thought it did," replied Suzanne.

Polly's Mail

BY EUNICE WARD

There is no use in denying the fact any longer—I am hopelessly in love with Polly; I, who have been so resolutely a bachelor that the epithet "confirmed" is applied to me on all occasions, am at last a victim of Cupid and consequently of his inseparable companion, the Green-Eyed Monster. I acknowledge that it would seem to the casual observer that in my case the Monster had nothing to do.

We are at Flat Springs—Polly for her mother's rheumatism and I—I may as well confess it—for my own. You don't necessarily have to be ancient to have rheumatism. There are seven people in the place beside ourselves, all elderly and married, none of them fit candidates for my jealous hatred; but in love, as in other things, it is the unseen foe that inspires the most terror; and there is such a foe

that writes to Polly numberless times a week—at least, so it seems to me. When she isn't receiving his epistles she is anxiously waiting for them, which is worse.

"He" writes a rather good hand, and his envelopes are all shapes and sizes; sometimes he seems to enclose things, for I see more than one red stamp in the corner. If I could catch a glimpse of the postmark I would be glad, but Polly usually slips these letters under her mother's or hurriedly turns them face down, which I consider a bad sign; and I have often caught her glancing sideways at me as if to see whether I noticed her. Added to this, she never reads them in the office, as the rest of us do and as she does her other mail, but scuttles off to her room as soon as the clerk hands them out. All of which is most trying for me.

At times I am tempted to ask her point blank who "he" is, taking an elderly, friendly tone, of course; but I know I couldn't keep up the pose, and, besides, on non-letter days, or when Polly and I go walking together (walking does my rheumatism good), or sit on the veranda in the twilight, I take the greatest pleasure in deliberately forgetting his existence.

When Polly is not available, I often take her mother for a little stroll. She is a charming woman, wrapped up in Polly, and always willing to talk about her. One day our stroll had been more prolonged than usual, when I realized that she must be getting tired and gently steered her toward home. The mail had just been distributed, and as we entered the door Polly rushed toward us waving a letter in the air.

"Oh, mother!" she exclaimed, in a tone unmistakably joyful. "I've just heard from—" Seeing me, she stopped and blushed furiously. Her hand fell to her side and the letter was hidden in the fold of her gown, but instinct told me it was from "him." I walked (if I were writing of any one else I should say I stalked) off to get my mail, and Polly and her mother disappeared. When I met them again her mother, who was beaming all over, said with a meaning glance:

"Polly is very happy today. Shall I not tell our friend the cause, daughter?"

But Polly, with the very deepest blush I have ever seen, exclaimed hurriedly:

"Oh, no, mother! Not just yet—not today."

"I only thought he might like to congratulate you," said her mother.

It seems from the "not yet" that I am to know it some day and am expected to be prepared with felicitations. Now, although I hardly think my modesty would permit me to congratulate Polly if she were engaged to me, I am quite sure that nothing in the world would allow me to appear overjoyed if she were engaged to any one else.

I wonder if she is beginning to be disappointed in him? Two letters in his handwriting came today; she took them to her room as usual, and when she came back, after a long time, her eyelids looked

rather red. Polly looks as I feel—dejected.

Today she is ill. Confound that ape; if I could lay my hands on him I'd—!

I sent her some flowers. In the moth-eaten jungle known as the garden there were three blossoms—two roses and a cinnamon pink. I picked them all and sent them to Polly, unmindful of the wrath of the proprietor, who accused me of devastating the premises. Polly returned a little note of thanks and appreciation of what she called my "unparalleled audacity in robbing the greenhouses." I chuckled over the note until I came to the signature; then I felt my eyes bulge out, for the signature was in "his" handwriting—Polly's name, written just as I had so often seen it upon those confounded letters. Of course, the handwriting of the note was like the signature. I rubbed my eyes and looked at it again; there was no mistake. Then who is he, or who is she, or what am I?

I have since been able to answer that query in a manner anything but flattering to my intelligence, but I am glad to say that Polly does not agree with me. She calls it "a most natural mistake." It seems that she had aspired to literary fame, her aspirations being periodically fanned by the numerous "Prize Story Contests" in the magazines. In compliance with editorial suggestions she always enclosed a stamped and self-directed envelope (she cultivated rather a masculine hand), which were invariably returned to her plus the manuscript. Once she received the announcement of one of her contribution's safe arrival at the editorial rooms, at which she permitted her hopes to soar high, only to be dashed to earth by the subsequent reappearance of the familiar pages. It was this final discouragement that caused the reddened eyelids that I had noticed. She had about decided to give the whole thing up, the rejection habit being too prevalent among editors. Of course, I thereupon gave her the opportunity to practice a little of it on her own account, but the dear girl was magnanimous and preferred to do as she would be done by. She said that, knowing what a rejection felt like, she could not bear to inflict it upon any one she cared for.

PARISIAN MODES by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS



MAISON REDFERN

Robe of chantilly lace with wide girdle giving the effect of a long tunic; the girdle ornamented with jeweled buttons.

PARISIAN MODES by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS



MAISON REDFERN

Summer costume; the skirt trimmed at the bottom with plaited mousseline de soie; the blouse corsage of mousseline de soie embroidered by hand.

PARISIAN MODES by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS



MAISON BÉCHOFF-DAVID

Afternoon costume of dotted fabric cut princess with flounces; the loose coat forming a cape effect.

PARISIAN MODES by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS



MAISON DRECOLL

Empire tea gown of tulle embroidered with tiny spangled wreaths. The cameo at the girdle distinguishes the costume.

PARISIAN MODES by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS



MAISON DAILLY

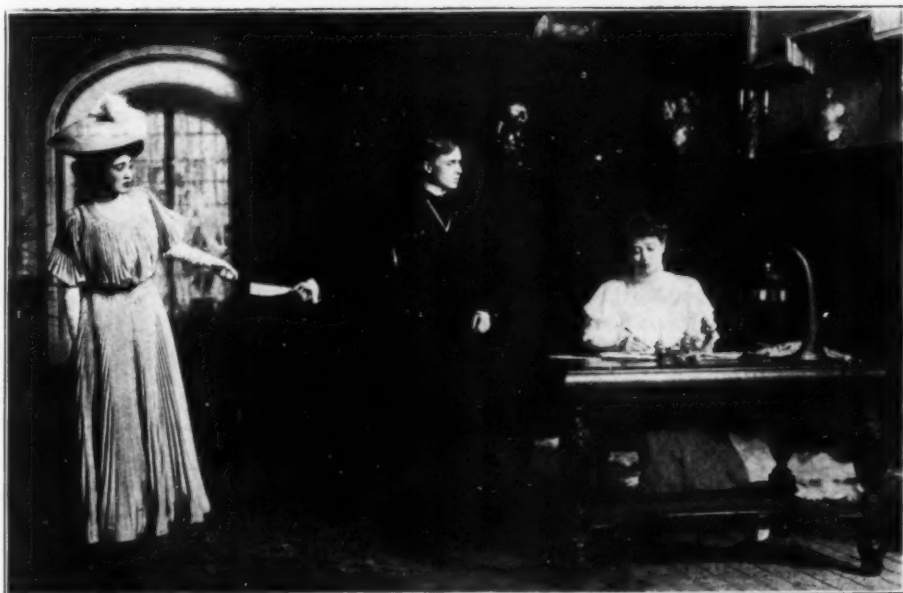
Morning costume of lawn, appliqued; the coat is of the Louis XVI type and the collar distinctly Fempadour.

PARISIAN MODES by special arrangement REUTLINGER, PARIS



MAISON NEY

Morning costume with blouse corsage forming a short bolero trimmed with English embroidery.



PHOTOGRAPH BY HALL, NEW YORK

Scene from the first act of "The Embarrassment of Riches."

Some Dramas of the Day

BY ACTON DAVIES

Ten years ago it was that blithe and rollicking little Englishwoman, the late Rosina Vokes, who usually brought New York its spring tonic in theatricals. In those good old days at Daly's Theater—actors now refer to them as the Augustin era—just as surely as the grass began to sprout in Madison Square and Daly's "Big Four"—Miss Rehan, Mrs. Gilbert, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Drew—at the head of the regular stock company, would make ready to flit on a short tour of the largest cities, jolly little Miss Vokes, with Courtnay Thorpe, Ferdinand Gottschalk, Isabelle Irving, Agnes Miller, and a number of other women, who were not only beauties in their own right but actresses as well, would take possession of the old playhouse and make their audiences laugh care to scorn. From early in May until the beginning of July, "My Milliner's Bill," in which Miss Vokes sang her inimitable song, "His Heart Was True to Poll," "The Circus Rider," and some other one-act plays, usually constituted her repertoire; but whenever she came,

whether in old plays or new, the indomitable spirit and the wholesome fun of this delightful little woman always won her a great welcome from New Yorkers.

Somehow or other, yesterday evening, when I went to see the new spring attraction at Daly's, memories of Miss Vokes and of all her fun-making would keep popping into mind. Of Daly's, one may now well say with a sigh, in the words of Raymond Hitchcock's song, "It was not like this in the Olden Days." In this house—for more than twenty years it was known as a home of mirth—the present management has installed the most ghastly and lugubrious spring attraction that Broadway has ever known. When one remembers that this theater, the one house with classical associations remaining on Broadway and which for nearly half a century was part and parcel of all that was representative of the best art of the drama, is now given over to a harrowing moving picture show, he gives up trying to think of the possible depths to which other houses of lesser repute may be dragged.

Months ago, when James J. Corbett, the reformed pugilist who has turned actor with some degree of success, appeared at Daly's, all the old-timers threw up their hands and expected to hear at any moment of the late Augustin Daly turning over in his grave. But somehow, bad and inappropriate as that attraction was, to see this theater devoted to a magic lantern show—with one poor unfortunate man banging on a piano an accompaniment to the San Francisco earthquake pictures, and the lugubrious lecturer on the stage drolling out cut-and-dried information to the audience, which never numbers more than thirty or forty people—is a sight to make any one feel sad. Then, too, the pictures themselves, showing as they do the awful horrors of the California holocaust, are enough to drive anybody to strong drink.

I left the theater as quickly as possible, and flying to the nearest antidote I found myself in Proctor's Twenty-third street



Vesta Victoria

theater. Here again, I was once more reminded of Miss Rosina Vokes. On the stage, as I entered, there was a woman of English birth and London breeding, who in a way possesses more of the gayety and drollery which was once Miss Vokes' than any actress I have seen. I refer, of course, to the woman whose songs have set all New York humming cockney ballads this year, and whose acting of these same songs has proven one of the artistic hits of a rather dreary season—Vesta Victoria.

About fifteen years ago, when quite a young girl, Miss Victoria came to Tony Pastor's and introduced a song which proved a classic in its day—"Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Bow-wow." From then until this season, America has only heard of her at long range. Some of her songs occasionally have floated across the water and been indifferently rendered here, but although at the present time about every tenth person in New York is whistling, "There Was I Awaiting at the



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEINBERG

Vesta Tilley: "Following In Father's Footsteps."

Church," until you have seen Miss Victoria sing it—I won't say heard her sing it, because seeing in this case is much more convincing—no one can appreciate the possibilities of this cockney lyric.

Again, like Miss Vokes, Miss Victoria, although in reality a very pretty woman, scorns to look lovely on the stage. Her make-ups are invariably those of the cockney's slavey, except in one song where she appears as a bedraggled bride, in a dirty white muslin and a debilitated looking wreath and veil. Her song tells the story of the bride who waited at the church, only to find the man she was to marry couldn't come that day because his wife wouldn't let him. The words of the song are as silly as they make them, but the air, the rhythm, and the infinite art which Miss



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEINBERG

Vesta Tilley as *The Curate*.



PHOTOGRAPH BY OTTO SARONY

Anna Johnston in "*Mistakes Will Happen*."

Victoria throws into her rendering make the song a masterpiece of comical low life.

She is just as true to the type she represents as Chevalier is to his, and the enormous success which this little woman has scored here only goes to prove once more that art is above nationality. One might have supposed that these essentially cockney songs would have missed many of their points here, but, on the contrary, I doubt if even London itself has ever appreciated Miss Victoria's work as fully as New York has done in the two months which she has spent here.

At the Colonial, meanwhile, another consummate English artist, who also re-

joices in the name of Vesta, has been proving her worth once more and her immense popularity on this side of the water. Vesta Tilley's work is as far removed from Miss Victoria's as the poles are apart. While Miss Victoria works with a crude brush and gets rough but

lowing in Father's Footsteps," in Eton jacket and high hat, she makes a very broth of a boy; and as the seaside sultan in white flannel, there is no dandy at either Brighton or Newport who is so completely *debonair*.

That these two Englishwomen should



Charlotte Walker in "Mistakes Will Happen."

telling results, Miss Tilley, in her male impersonation, is delicate and as dainty as it is possible for any woman to be who attempts to play a boy. Through all her impersonations—and this, by the way, is one of their greatest charms—there shines Miss Tilley's own feminine personality. For instance, when she sings, "I'm Fol-

lowing in Father's Footsteps," in Eton jacket and high hat, she makes a very broth of a boy; and as the seaside sultan in white flannel, there is no dandy at either Brighton or Newport who is so completely *debonair*. That these two Englishwomen should



PHOTOGRAPH BY HALL, NEW YORK

The Fortune In the Cup.
A scene from "The Embarrassment of Riches."

were at one of the first performances of a Broadway play.

This year, in particular, they have proved a veritable god-send to the dramatic critics, for this season's crop of spring plays proved, in most instances, such dire failures, that if it had not been for some of the vaudeville successes, the reviewers would have been left with absolutely nothing to write about.

The only play recently produced which shows the slightest sign of surviving to another season is "The Embarrassment of Riches," by Lewis Kaufman Anspacher. It is now running at Wallack's, with Mr. Bruce McRae and Miss Charlotte Walker in the principal rôles.

The play deals with a subject which, properly handled by a big dramatist, might yield a great American play. The

experiences of an East Side settlement worker, *John Russel*, the hero, are supposed to form a composite picture of the activities in this line of President Roosevelt, Jacob A. Riis, and District Attorney Jerome. The fact that in no place does the principal rôle portray the slightest of the characteristics of any one of them only goes to show, in his drawing of this particular character, how far short Mr. Anspacher has fallen from the ideals which he set himself.

The heroine, the press agent was equally careful to assert before the production, was supposed to be a sort of half portrait of Miss Helen Gould. But it is rather hard to see how this could be the case, as until just before the play begins, *Elizabeth Holt*, the heroine, has been a poor teacher in one of the East Side grammar schools. Suddenly she inherits an immense fortune

and becomes one of the great millionairesses of today, but the change in her position makes *Elizabeth* far more lonely than she ever was before, and the crop of fortune hunters, which includes an English duke of the most conventional stage type, that immediately surround her, make the young woman extremely suspicious as well.

Hers is no bed of roses, by any manner of means, and as all her interests lie on the East Side, among the tenements where she used to labor, she adopts the ruse of passing herself off as her own secretary, going among the poor as in former days. She writes a letter to *John Russel*, the great philanthropist, who is devoting all his time and energy to the betterment of the tenement housekeepers, offering to give him—as *Miss Holt*—a very large sum of money to use in his settlement, and tells him that her secretary will call to discuss particulars with him.

Elizabeth and *John Russel* meet. He, mistaking her for his stenographer, asks her to do some dictation for him. She works so successfully that he sends out for tea and cakes. Just as they are telling each other's fortunes from the empty tea cups the settlement house is raided, or rather, I should say, the house next door is invaded by the police. In this house, the English duke, several society women, and a number of well-known men about town have been making bets on the races. When the police break in they take refuge in the fire escapes and

finally make their way into the settlement house, where *Russel* and *Miss Holt* are just beginning to experience the dawn of a great love. The police follow them. Everybody is arrested with the exception of *John Russel*. He wears a fireman's badge, and that seems to give him a pull with the police. Even the wealthy *Miss Holt* is torn away from her tea and typewriter and conveyed to a dungeon cell.

Russel tries to prevent this, but the police won't listen to him. The end of the second act finds them all in jail with the exception of the philanthropist, and he, like the weak-kneed stage hero that he is, evidently does nothing to help them out or to get them back.

When the third act opens on the following morning there he is, looking as spick and span as a new pin, while poor *Elizabeth*, the society women, and the duke, limp and bedraggled after their night in the tombs, look for all the world like the last run of shad. The scene is *Miss Holt's* house, and *Russel* explains that he has come there

to see *Miss Holt* and try to get her to forgive her secretary for being out all night. The English duke has seized that same particular moment to propose to *Miss Holt*. Of course she refuses him, as Americans always do refuse English dukes—in plays—and at the sight of *Russel* she could restrain herself no longer. So as soon as the duke's back is turned she rushes to him and tells him that she is *Miss Holt*. The philanthropist at once informs her that had he known this he would never



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEINBERG

Vesta Tilley
as "The Seaside Sultan."

have proposed marriage to her, but she begged him not to go back on his word, for after all she was only a poor, lonely spinster and her one wish in the world is to be happy, though married.

The trouble with Mr. Anspacher's play is that he has not gone deep enough into his theme. Characters which might have offered really fine dramatic possibilities he has treated in an almost farcical manner. His philanthropist is a skim-milk person and only the admirable performance, which Mr. Bruce McRae gives of the part, saves it from being ludicrous.

On the other hand, *Miss Holt's* character is exceedingly well drawn. This part is taken by Miss Charlotte Walker, who makes her appearance in the eighth new production this season. She plays with sincerity, naturalness, and a great deal of charm.

Speaking of Miss Walker reminds me



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCEAU

Rebecca Warren as The Madonna in a miracle play.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCEAU

Rebecca Warren as "Mary" in a miracle play.

of a little story which she told on herself the other evening.

"I suppose everybody is beginning to regard me as a Jonah," laughed Miss Walker, "but I can't help it; I'm not a bit worried about myself, and I can say that honestly, without any conceit.

"It is true that nearly every one of the plays in which I have appeared this season has proved a failure; but it seems to me that any one, by reading the notices, can see that the fault lies with the playwrights and not with little Charlotte. Now that the season is nearly over, I can let a cat out of the bag which I wouldn't have divulged before for worlds.

"Last September, just before the production of "The Prodigal Son," in which I was to create one of the leading parts, I met a famous palmist at a friend's house. He read my hand, and this is what he told me:

"Your professional life this season will be a very variegated one. You will play in six new productions, but not one of them will be a real success. You will also be seen in two other rôles, parts which have been created by some one else, and you will play successfully for a short time. After the eighth production your luck will change, and early in September you will appear in a piece which will score one of the biggest successes of the new season."

"So far as the failures are concerned, the palmist has predicted absolutely right," laughed Miss Walker in conclusion. "But what's troubling me now is, if the man really predicts things truthfully, why shouldn't I double my salary for next season. I've had three offers to open in September, and I think the only way for me to choose is to tell the palmist's story to each of the managers, and then accept the one who offers me the largest salary as a mascot, even if not as an actress."

Alla Nasimoff, the famous Russian actress who was leading woman with the exiled Russian players, will be a star in English next season under the direction of the Henry Miller Company. Miss Anglin has taken a great interest in Mlle. Nasimoff, and it was largely due to her efforts that

the deal was consummated. Mlle. Nasimoff speaks English fairly well. This summer she will study the language diligently under the supervision of Miss Anglin. A new play is to be obtained for Mlle. Nasimoff, to be staged by Henry Miller.

"The Social Whirl Country Club," an organization designed for the comfort and diversion of the company appearing in the musical comedy at the Casino, in New York, was recently formed with Charles J. Ross as president, and Joseph Coyne, secretary. The old Phillips mansion, near Bronxville, was leased for a term of three months beginning June first, and now is being put in condition for the purpose in hand.

In Boston, recently, under the auspices of the Tavern Club, a miracle play, by Mr. Winthrop Ames, was produced behind closed doors. Invitations to some two hundred guests were issued, and although they included some of the best-known reviewers in the country, no account of the performance was published, as it was entirely a private affair. The only portion of the performance which was made public were some very beautiful pictures of Miss Rebecca Warren, as the *Virgin*.

The scenes of the play were laid immediately before and after the birth of Christ. The performance is soon to be repeated in private, but under no condition, will Mr. Ames permit a public performance. The play is unnamed.



PHOTOGRAPH BY HALL, NEW YORK

Scene from third act of "The Embarrassment of Riches."